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ELIZABETHAN ULSTER

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INTRODUCTORY

Con Bacagh's visit to Henry VIII.—His wars with Shane—Preference for his illegitimate son Ferdoragh—Ferdoragh's parentage—His character—Con Bacagh's reformation—Renewed wars between Con Bacagh, Ferdoragh and Shane—A famine follows—Croft removes Con Bacagh to Dublin—Duel between Ferdoragh and Shane—Ignominious flight of Shane—Alexander McDonnell of the Isles and his sons—Croft attempts to expel them from Ulster—Attack on Rathlin Island—Croft's successive failures—St. Leger returns as deputy—He renews the attempts against the Scots—Sidney exterminates the Rathlin Island population—War between Culoagh O'Donnell and his father, Manus—Battle of Ballybofey—Hugh O'Donnell and Shane combine at Carricklea—Their defeat.

CON BACAGH, the son of Con, of the race of Neil Nayg Yarragh, visited King Henry VIII. at his English Court in 1543, and came away with the ignominious title of Earl of Tyrone, undertaking in its place to drop that of O'Neil, which was of Royal pretensions.

Con Bacagh's visit was not wholly one of choice. He went, so to speak, on his knees. Two years earlier he and Manus O'Donnell had swooped down upon the Pale, burned Navan and Ardee, and turned Ulsterwards again, carrying with them immense booty, so immense, in fact, that Lord Louth, following hot on their heels, overtook them at Ballahoe, on the outskirts of Monaghan, and so expedited their return that the booty had to be abandoned. The sacrilege of the invasion, however, had to be punished, and in 1541 St. Leger, the successor to Lord Grey, three times invaded Tyrone, and at the third attempt brought Con Bacagh to his knees.

The old Chief's downfall had been helped to a great extent by the co-operation with the English of McMahan, Magennis, O'Hanlon, and Con Bacagh's recent but fickle ally, Manus O'Donnell. O'Rourke, O'Byrne and McQuillin subsequently

added their submission, and the whole coterie of chieftains unequivocally renounced the Pope, with the solitary exception of O'Byrne, who sturdily declined. The chiefs were chastised with a very silken scourge. It was felt that Con Bacagh was the real delinquent, and that, if only his good conduct could be forced or bribed, the rest would soon settle down as good domestic landowners. In pursuance of this view, all that was demanded of them by way of an adjunct to their submission, was that they should pay rent to the Crown, hold their lands by Knight's service, forswear Irish usages and exactions, more especially the evil practices of Coyne, Livery and Bonaght, and live in peace with their neighbours. In the meanwhile Con Bacagh—as has been said—went to the English Court, not for execution or even imprisonment, but so that he should see with his own eyes how things were done among the great and enlightened, and carry back with him a lasting impression of Court life as it should be. A fitting ceremonial accompanied his reception.

The Ulster Prince, attired in a splendid robe valued at £65, and presented to him by the King, was led into the Queen's chamber at Greenwich by the Earls of Oxford and Hertford. The room was hung with cloth of Arras and luxuriously strewn with rushes. The Viscount Lisle bore O'Neil's sword. O'Neil then knelt on the rushes, while the King girt on his sword, hung round his neck a gold chain valued at £60, and handed him his patent as Earl of Tyrone, together with 100 marks as pocket-money. O'Neil then made a suitable reply in Irish, and the whole party adjourned to the more congenial function of a banquet, where tongues were doubtless still further loosened.

The main idea at the back of the ceremony seems to have been that, with the putting on of his gold chain and English title, O'Neil would absorb a proper measure of civilization, which he would, in due course, transmit to his people in Ulster, and so reclaim them from their savage ways. This proved, in fact, to be a very vain hope. If the splendour with which he saw himself surrounded made any impression on O'Neil, it certainly made none on his methods of life. In Ireland he was held to have lowered himself. He had surrendered the royal title of O'Neil for that of a mere subject. It was considered a degradation in place of being an honour. O'Neil himself no doubt shared this view, but he was too wise to say so.

He looked on his acceptance of the despised title as an empty concession to the strange whims of the English, and he had no intention that it should for one moment alter the traditional customs of his race, or interfere with his prescriptive right as the O'Neil to torture and hang his own subjects and pillage and plunder his neighbours.

By a curious decree of fate, however, it was ordained that the ceremony of investiture at Greenwich—despised though it was at the time—was to prove the first cause of many years of strife and bloodshed among the various branches of the O'Neil family. The trouble arose in the following way. Con Bacagh's favourite son, Ferdoragh, was created Baron of Dungannon at the same time that his father was made an earl, and the succession to the earldom was vested in Ferdoragh and his heirs male. The arrangement was one in which all the elements of future trouble were contained, for Ferdoragh had an elder brother, who was the father of Tirlough Braselagh, and Con Bacagh had an avowedly legitimate son named Shane by Mary O'Neil of Clandeboye. Shane claimed that Ferdoragh was not only illegitimate, but was probably not Con Bacagh's son at all, but the son of a blacksmith at Dundalk (as unquestionably he ought to have been), adding that Con Bacagh was "so much of a gentleman that he never refused any son that was put upon him." It is to be assumed, therefore, that the parentage of Ferdoragh, on the father's side, was a matter of some uncertainty, but that Con Bacagh was quite willing to accept the charge, being possibly influenced by his personal preference for Ferdoragh to the less attractive Shane.

Of the first Baron's character we know little, for he was early murdered by the outraged Shane, but what little we do know is good. He was a century ahead of Con Bacagh in culture and intelligence, and his tendencies seem to have been progressive rather than reactionary. Shane, on the other hand, was not only a repulsive character in himself, but a reactionary of the worst type, and, had Ferdoragh only lived and succeeded as O'Neil, the history of Ulster might have been very different.

After the Greenwich ceremony the new Earl of Tyrone returned to Ulster, and for the next two years conducted himself in a highly exemplary manner, even to the extent of assisting Henry in his French wars with a contingent of ninety Kerne, whose elemental methods of warfare drew forth indignant pro-

tests from the King of France. At the end of this period, however, signs of restlessness began to manifest themselves in the newly-made Earl. While outwardly conforming to the first, second and third of the conditions imposed upon him, Con Bacagh soon made it clear that the condition which stipulated that he should live in peace with his neighbours was one which no O'Neil could be expected to take seriously. Con Bacagh did not take it seriously; after a decent pretence of amity, he and his sons started fighting, or, to put it more accurately, devastating one another's lands so persistently that the country was soon brought to very great distress. Sir Thomas Cusack, the Chancellor, wrote in 1551 that "the country of Tyrone is brought through war of the Earl and his sons (one of themselves against other) to such extreme misery as there is not ten ploughs in all Tyrone. Hundreds this last year and this summer died in the field through famine." This tragedy was deliberately brought about by the Earl himself, who professed such deep-rooted contempt for ploughs and similar implements that he threatened to take very drastic measures to prevent their use on his lands.* Sir James Croft, who succeeded St. Leger in 1551, joined with the Baron of Dungannon in a praiseworthy attempt to stay the famine and restore prosperity by sowing wheat, but the Earl out of sheer hatred of innovations broke up the ploughs and burned any crops he could find. "For this is the chief cause of the famine," the victims told Croft, "that the Earl did destroy their corn for bringing new things to his country other than have been used before. And what the Earl will promise now within two hours after he will not abide by the same." So the Earl and his wife Mary were removed by Croft to Dublin, not as a punishment, but in order to give his country a chance of recovering itself under the more enlightened administration of his son Ferdoragh, Baron of Dungannon.

The fight in Tyrone was now narrowed to a duel for the succession between Ferdoragh and Shane, the former having substantial Government support in the person of Sir Nicholas Bagenal, whom Croft had now appointed Marshal of Ireland. Ferdoragh and Bagenal, whose headquarters were at Newry, worked well together, and as far as eastern Ulster was concerned they proved too strong a combination for Shane, but the latter

* Carew MSS., 1552, 200.

had the north and west wholly under his dominion. The Baron's ambition, however, aimed at more than the mere lordship of the east, and in the autumn of 1551 he determined to set the seal of his authority on Shane's country by the usual methods of fire and sword. With this natural object in view, he and the Marshal organized a predatory expedition into the Dungannon district. For two days they destroyed property without hindrance from any; on the third day there was a chance encounter with the enemy, but the meeting appears to have been as unexpected as it certainly was unwelcome to one of the parties concerned. Bagenal described the incident as follows: "The Baron of Dungannon, with four horsemen in his company, being far before their fellows, found Shane upon a hill in his country, environed by woods and accompanied with eighteen horsemen and sixty Kerne, and perceiving the Baron with so small a company to be there, said: 'If the King were there where thou art he were mine;' the Baron, coming forward, said: 'I am but the King's man, and that thou shalt well know,' then, broching his horse with the spurs, thrust into the press. Shane fled with his company to the woods. The Baron followed, and having no opportunity of striking him neither with spear nor sword, the woods were so thick, as he gripped to have taken him by the neck a bough in the pass put the Baron from him and almost from his own horse. So Shane escaped afoot."*

The Baron returned from this remarkable exploit (in which four horsemen charged and routed seventy-eight warriors favourably situated on a hill) with four captured horses and three hundred cattle. It is only fair to Shane's reputation to point out that the respective numbers engaged can only have been furnished by the Baron himself, and that his estimate of Shane's retinue was possibly a generous one.

Croft's administration was mainly conspicuous for his consistent support of Dungannon against Shane, and for his abortive attempt to rid north-east Ulster of the Scotch settlement, which now extended in a thin line along the coast from the Bann to Glenarm. This young colony, destined in time to play such an important part in the history of Ireland, had been started about the year 1520 by the Highland Chieftain, Alex. McDonald of the Isles, who left six sons by Catherine Macquoin

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. III., 56. Bagenal to Croft, Oct. 27th, 1551.

of Ardna-murchan. At the time of Croft's administration these six sons, James, Alexander Oge (or Junior), Donald, Angus, Colla and Sorley Boy, were all alive, though not continuously resident in Ulster. Colla, the youngest but one, was the officially appointed representative of the clan in Ireland, the other brothers spending the bulk of their time in Cantyre, but always ready to come over if and when required.

This invasion from the West Highlands was looked upon in Government circles with anything but favour, and one of Croft's first acts was to organize an expedition to the north-east coast of Antrim, with a view to expelling or annihilating the intruders. Feeling themselves powerless to face the Deputy's formidable array on the mainland, the McDonalds prudently withdrew to Rathlin Island, some six miles off the coast, where they were presently attacked by the Government forces, under Sir Ralph Bagenal and Captain Cuffe, augmented by a strong force of the Ulster Irish and by two fine men-of-war. The combined forces, however, accomplished nothing of lasting consequence. The men-of-war pounded Colla's new Castle of Keanbaan to pieces, but a landing was never effected, and Bagenal finally withdrew in discomfiture, with the loss of a good many of his men. No sooner was his back turned than Colla started rebuilding his battered Castle, which, when finished, he rechristened Donanany (presumably after the castle of that name on the mainland), and where he lived in peace with Evelyn Mcquillin, his wife, till his death occurred in 1558.*

A second expedition against the Scots, six months later, commanded by Bagenal and the Baron of Dungannon, met with no better success. Nothing of the slightest military value was accomplished, and two hundred of the Government men—according to the statement of the Four Masters—perished from one cause or another in the course of the undertaking. Croft was naturally annoyed by this reverse, but not discouraged, and towards the close of the year 1552 he launched a third expedition into north Antrim. Dungannon again accompanied the Marshal, but he imprudently allowed his party to get separated from that of Bagenal, and Shane, who was hovering on the flank, was not slow to take advantage of such a golden opportunity for avenging himself on his half-brother for the

* Hill's "McDonnells of Antrim."

loss of his four horses and three hundred cows. On this occasion it is to be assumed that the Baron and his men were either more heavily outnumbered than they had been on the occasion of Dungannon's remarkable feat in the autumn of 1551, or else that their prowess was less conspicuous, for the fact stands out that they were signally defeated with considerable loss of life. There is no reason to suppose that this intervention of Shane in matters which did not strictly concern him in any sense aimed at helping the Scotch. It was purely a personal matter between himself and his half-brother, but the effect undoubtedly was to render Croft's third and last effort against the Scots as abortive as the previous two.

In 1553 St. Leger, returning to Ireland for the third time, succeeded Croft, and, pursuing the same policy as his predecessors, made a great effort to expel the Medonalds, both from the Route and Glynns (Lower and Upper Dunluce and Cary), and from the Ards, where they had also temporarily established a footing; but at the end of a six weeks' campaign he was forced to admit failure and had to return to Dublin.

St. Leger's administration was not a success. Like all Irish deputies, he was chiefly hated for his good deeds. After three years of inglorious administration, he returned, deeply discouraged, to England, and was succeeded by Lord Fitzwalter, better known as the Earl of Sussex. Sussex got together the most formidable force yet assembled in Ireland, and, marching north with caution and deliberation, reached Glenarm on the twenty-fourth day after leaving Dublin. This time the Medonalds did not await events, but, yielding to *force majeure*, crossed the water to Scotland. Sussex, eager to justify his expedition and its cost, expended his energies on all the destructible property he could find on the mainland, while Sir Henry Sidney crossed to Rathlin Island, and there exterminated the entire population.* The Government force then returned to Dublin, and the Medonalds returned from Cautyre to the Route.

All the Government's efforts of the past five years had been directed against the Medonalds, and the ruling clans of the centre and west of Ulster had during this period taken advantage

* Carew MSS. Sidney to Walsingham, March 1st, 1583; also see Carew MSS. 1557, 359. The numbers killed in this first massacre at Rathlin Island are not given, and the whole incident is dismissed very briefly, from which it is reasonable to assume that the population on the island at the time was so small that its destruction was not considered worth recording.

of their immunity from outside interference to devastate one another to their hearts' content. Shane O'Neil's main object at the time was to depose his father, Con Baeagh, from the throne of Ulster, which he considered that he could fill far more satisfactorily himself. In the neighbouring county of Tyrconnell (Donegal) Calvagh O'Donnell was very similarly engaged in an attempt to depose his own father Manus. To aid him in this unfilial operation he had enlisted the co-operation of O'Cahan of Coleraine on the understanding that, if he defeated his father and became the O'Donnell, he would use all the fighting forces of Tyrconnell in support of O'Cahan's claim for independence from the overlordship of Shane. This compact sealed, the two new allies advanced in martial array into Tyrconnell, but unfortunately for their mutual projects were heavily defeated by Manus at Ballybofey.

Calvagh, however, was not to be discouraged. He attributed his defeat less to bad generalship than to the inferior quality of his fighting material, and, with a view to putting this right, he sailed for Scotland and there hired a force with which he returned to Loch Foyle in 1555. As a preliminary measure he started by destroying the two Inishowen strongholds of Newcastle and Ellagh, and then, passing on to Rossreagh, inflicted a decisive defeat on his father, whom he took prisoner.

Calvagh does not appear to have treated old Manus badly, but he shut him up in Lifford Castle, where he remained till he died in 1564. Manus is given a good character, both by the Four Masters and by St. Leger, who describes him as "a sober, well-inclined man." He was a patron and student of literature.

Manus's deposition was a curious repetition of family history, for he himself had behaved in an exactly similar way to his own father, Hugh Duv, nor did the analogy end there, for just as Manus—after dispossessing his father—had to fight his three brothers, so did Calvagh now have to fight his own half-brother Hugh, who naturally disputed with him his claim to the chieftry. Manus had hanged his eldest brother John, and Hugh—no doubt bearing this in mind, and having no wish to make the analogy with the past too exact—invoked the aid of Shane O'Neil against Calvagh and his imported Scotch army.

Shane, in spite of the fact that he was married to Calvagh's daughter Margaret, gladly took up Hugh's quarrel, doubtless seeing an opportunity for carrying out his pet scheme of

extending his rule to the far western shore of Tyreconnell, or Donegal, as we may for better convenience call it. Shane got together a large army and joined forces with Hugh at Carrieklea, just above the junction of the rivers Finn and Mourne. Here the allies pitched their camp, and, in order to celebrate the occasion, caroused so freely and imprudently that during a very dark and rainy night they were surprised by Calvagh and his mercenaries and completely routed. Shane himself—as on the occasion of his personal encounter with Dungannon—displayed the greatest cowardice, and, without attempting to fight, crept out of the back of his tent and ran down to the river Finn, which he crossed. He then followed its left bank up for some miles, recrossed it and then the river Derg, which brought him to Termanomongan. Here he procured a horse, on which he got safely away to Clogher. Pursuit does not appear to have been very vigorous, for the victorious army fell on the wines which the vanquished had left and completed the interrupted carouse. The spoil taken was considerable. We are told that Calvagh's son Con got for his own share no less than eighty horses, including Shane's famous charger, "Son of the Eagle."*

Shane eventually made his way back to his castle at Benburb on the Blackwater, where he consoled himself for his defeat by Calvagh by brutally ill-treating Calvagh's daughter, who had the misfortune to be his wife. For the best part of a year he remained politically quiet, but in the following year, 1558, he settled for ever the vexed question of succession, by waylaying and murdering the Baron of Dungannon in the neighbourhood of Armagh. The old Earl of Tyrone (Con Bacagh), on learning the news, realized that—unless he took prompt measures for his own safety—he was likely to follow in the wake of his son, and he accordingly lost no time in getting back to Dublin and the friendly protection of the English Government. He died the following year at the ripe age of seventy-five. He had few good points, and the way in which he deliberately produced a famine among his own people in order to emphasize his hatred of English agricultural improvements, stamps him as the very primitive man and very callous tyrant. His last earthly utterance was a curse which he invoked on any and all of his posterity who should learn English, sow wheat, or build a stone house.†

* Four Masters.

† Cal. State Papers, Dec. 7th, 1598.

CHAPTER I

Capture of Culoagh O'Donnell by Shane—Shane's cruel treatment of Culoagh and his wife—Sussex appointed Lord Lieutenant—His Northern expedition—Overthrow of his raiding party—Sussex retaliates—Shane's submission—His visit to Elizabeth—Murder of Brian McBaron—Tirlough Luineach—Shane's return to Ireland—He violates all the terms of his submission—His raid on Donegal—Unreasonable attitude of Ulster Chiefs—The McDonnell settlement in the Route—Cusack's support of Shane—Elizabeth and the Ulster Scots.

SHANE O'NEIL'S triumph in Tyrone was now complete, and he lost no time in having himself formally invested as the O'Neil at Tullahogue, with the usual unpleasant rites associated with the ceremony. Further triumphs, however, were in store for him. Calvagh O'Donnell was still at war with his half-brother Hugh, and in the spring of 1561 he sent an expedition to attack Caffar O'Donnell (a brother of Hugh) at his island stronghold at Lough Veagh in West Donegal. Calvagh himself very prudently remained behind with his wife at the monastery of Killdonnell, on Lough Swilly, twelve miles from the scene of action. Here—according to the Four Masters—he pleasantly spent his time in carousing till May 14th, when he was rudely awakened by the sudden and unwelcome appearance of Shane, who had received information through some of the O'Donnells of the unprotected state of their chief, and who lost no time in arriving on the scene with a strong band of followers.

Calvagh and his wife could, of course, put up no defence, and were carried off into captivity, where they were both very cruelly used. Calvagh was fettered with gyves round his neck and ankles, so arranged that he could neither stand nor sit. His sufferings, according to his own statement, were excruciating. In order to extract from him the secret of his treasure, Shane had the gyves strained so tight that “the blood did run down on either side of mine irons, in so much that I did wish after death

a thousand times.”* His wife, a Maclean, and the widow of the Earl of Argyle, became Shane’s mistress by night, and during the day was chained by the wrist to a small boy so as to prevent her escape.†

The object of Shane’s support of Hugh O’Donnell against Calvagh was now made clear, for—having safely disposed of the latter—he proclaimed himself Lord of Donegal, and, indeed, of all Ulster from Drogheda to the sea. On the strength of this piratical extension of his territory he made a formal application to the Crown for the title of Earl of Ulster, but—it need scarcely be said—without success.

Old Manus was still alive and the official O’Donnell, and by Calvagh’s capture the old chief once more regained his liberty, but he was too feeble and broken in health to resist, or even to resent, Shane’s cool annexation of his lands. His sons Hugh and Caffar resented it most acutely, but were not strong enough to resist. They were both feeble creatures, totally devoid of spirit or military capacity. Shane’s insolence in formally demanding the title of Earl of Ulster had the effect of arousing the full resentment of Elizabeth, who had just succeeded her sister to the throne. The title was a royal one and scrupulously reserved for Royalty, and Shane’s claim to it pointed to a sense of growing power which it was felt must be promptly curbed. Sussex was sent back to Ireland with the full title of Lord Lieutenant, and with orders to bring the Northern Chief to his senses by one means or another. The selection of Sussex for this duty was not a happy one. He had proved a failure before, and he was destined to prove no less of a failure on this occasion. Entirely destitute of military genius, his only idea of warfare lay in the destruction of the enemy’s country. His one good point was his energy, but even this was misdirected.

The Lord Lieutenant lost no time in getting to work. Before the end of 1561 he had pushed north nearly as far as Armagh without encountering any resistance. Making Armagh his headquarters, he sent out a raiding party into Shane’s territory to the north-west, which succeeded in collecting a formidable drove of cattle, with which the raiding party began to make its way back in triumph to Armagh. Shane, however, was hot on their heels with 300 Scots and 200 Gallowglasses, and, choosing a moment when the raiders had relaxed their watch,

* Calvagh to Elizabeth, Oct. 29th, 1564.

† Bagwell II., 75.

he launched a fierce and unexpected attack on the rear of the column. The English, completely taken by surprise, were thrown into hopeless confusion; 50 were killed, 50 more wounded, and all the cattle returned whence they had come.* The distress of the Lord Lieutenant over this calamity was very great, and he blamed himself bitterly for not having accompanied the expedition personally. The blow to his prestige was almost irremediable, and was only equalled by the stimulus given to Shane's reputation. To recover his lost ground, Sussex made an exceptionally vigorous effort. With a formidable and mobile force he made a rapid march across the foot of Slieve Gallion to the wilds of Glenconkein (Loughinshollin in Co. Londonderry), which was Shane's most inaccessible fastness, driving in all the cattle as he went. Shane made no appearance and attempted no resistance, having, in fact, withdrawn still further west into the Sperrin mountains, and 4,000 cattle and a host of ponies were collected. Sussex's action on this occasion was singularly characteristic of his methods. With a clear recollection of the calamity which had overtaken his previous raiding expedition, he had all the captured cattle slaughtered on the spot, after which he proceeded methodically to lay waste the surrounding country. From Glenconkein he moved southwest to Omagh, and thence down the river Mourne to the Foyle, where a victualling fleet had been ordered to put in. The expected fleet, however, did not materialize, and Sussex had to content himself with collecting a further 500 cattle, with which he returned in triumph to Armagh. Throughout the expedition there had been an entire absence of fighting; Shane and his armed forces keeping discreetly out of the way.

Sussex's methods, brutal and inartistic as they may appear to us, were probably a necessity of the times, and the only methods which were really intelligible to those he was dealing with. In any event the desired result was certainly achieved, for Shane, whose local reputation had no doubt waned in exact ratio to the destruction of his assets by Sussex, came into Carrickfergus, where he made abject and unconditional submission. It was eventually arranged that—following in the footsteps of his father—he should go on a visit to the English Court, not as a prisoner, but as a guest. He accordingly sailed for England early in 1562. Sussex, apparently quite satisfied

* Sussex to Cecil, July 31st, 1561.

with his exploit, followed him within a few months, leaving Sir William Fitzwilliam to carry on the administration of Ireland.*

Elizabeth's real object in getting this wild Irish chieftain to her Court is not quite clear. It may have been partly curiosity, but the probability is that there were deeper aims behind. Ferdoragh, Baron of Dungannon, was dead—as Shane had taken good care that he should be—but Brian, his eldest son, was now growing to manhood, and the royal hopes of reclaiming Ulster from savagery were, at the moment, centred in this youth. His father had been a consistent supporter of the English, not only against Shane, but (a more important matter in English eyes) against the Antrim Scotch, and their disquieting encroachments. He had also given evidence of an intelligent appreciation of English customs, and it was a reasonable hope that the son would, in this respect, follow in his father's footsteps. Anyhow, it was considered impossible that he could be as bad as Shane, who was without a redeeming characteristic. Accordingly, during O'Neil's absence in England, Fitzwilliam, acting under royal instructions, paid special attention to young Brian, gaining his friendship by small acts of kindness, and taking advantage of their friendship to train him in the way he should go. His chief aim was to eradicate from Brian's mind any lurking feeling of friendship for the Scots, with whom he had spent two and a half years in Cantyre as the nominal prisoner of James Medonnell of the Isles.†

Shane, in the meanwhile, was enjoying himself thoroughly at Court. His first appearance created something in the nature of a sensation, for he entered the presence of the Queen with a retinue of six shaggy-maned Gallowlasses, bearing battle-axes and wearing wide-sleeved saffron shirts, coats of mail and cloaks of rough fur. Shane himself came in on his knees, prostrated himself before the Queen, and "howling confessed his rebellion," in fluent Irish, for the O'Neil had no more English than his father before him.‡

The rebellion which Shane "howling confessed" on his knees, was hardly such in the ordinary sense, *i.e.*, he had in no

* The only essential difference between the title of Lord Lieutenant and that of Deputy was that the former was allowed to leave Ireland and could nominate a Deputy in his absence.

† The McDonalds who settled in Antrim soon became McDonnells, a form of spelling which consorted better with the Irish pronunciation of the name.

‡ Camden's "Elizabeth."

way molested the Pale or any of the Government stations. His crimes were exclusively crimes against his own countrymen, and his only quarrel with England lay in the fact that he had grossly violated the compact entered into with Cusack in 1552. In this compact it had been expressly stipulated that neither Dungannon, Calvagh, Maguire nor Tirlough Luineach should be molested, and that the O'Neil was to confine his brigandage to his own specified boundaries. This he had not done; but his two gravest faults *vis-à-vis* the English Government had been the murder of Dungannon and the imprisonment and torture of Calvagh.

Shane was entertained for a considerable time at the English Court. The Queen wanted to see young Brian O'Neil, now Baron of Dungannon, before she could decide how far he was worth supporting as a counterpoise to Shane. Accordingly, on May 13th, 1562, she wrote to Fitzwilliam, instructing him to send the boy over. Fitzwilliam at once acted on these instructions, and Brian was on his way to Carlingford, with a view to taking ship, when he was waylaid by Tirlough Luineach, with a hundred or so of the Donnelly sept, and murdered. Brian could make no resistance, for he had only twenty men with him, but he succeeded for a time in eluding his pursuers by hiding, naked to the skin, in a thicket, with the intention of swimming the river as soon as it was dark. One of his followers, however, betrayed his hiding-place, and he was dragged out and butchered.*

This act first brings Tirlough Luineach into prominence in Ulster. He was the son of Neil Connelly O'Neil, and a grandson to Art O'Neil, who was Con Bacagh's brother. He was therefore first cousin once removed to Shane. Tirlough Luineach was the official tanist, *i.e.*, the nominated heir in case of Shane's death, so that he had a potential interest in Brian's death; but there is very little doubt that the act was secretly instigated by Shane himself, and that the Donnelly sept, who were Shane's foster-brothers, were mainly responsible for the act, though Tirlough Luineach was their nominal leader at the time of the murder.

Brian left two brothers, Hugh and Cormac, and a half-brother named Art, who was older than either. Hugh automatically became Baron of Dungannon, and lived to become the

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. V., 82, 83, 84.

second Earl of Tyrone, and the most persistent rebel of all the long list of turbulent O'Neils.

With Brian's death the desirability of keeping Shane in England passed away, and so, with £300 in his pocket, the promise of O'Cahan's country, and a rhetorical outburst of loyal protestations on his lips, he set sail for Ulster.* The terms to which he bound himself were to keep the peace for six months with O'Donnell, Maguire, O'Reilly, O'Hanlon, McMahon and Magennis, while a commission, consisting of the Earl of Kildare, the Earl of Ormonde and four members of the Irish Privy Council, two named by himself and two by his opponent, should sit and decide on all local differences. Shane furthermore undertook not to molest the garrison at Armagh, so long as it was victualled from the Pale, and to bring Calvagh O'Donnell before a tribunal consisting of the four Earls of Thomond, Desmond, Clanricard and Kildare, who should pronounce as to his liberation or otherwise. Shane had no sooner got back to Ulster than he coolly proceeded to break every covenant he had made. The six months' independence of the lesser chiefs, to which he had pledged himself with such passionate vehemence in London, he now laughed at as a stipulation beneath consideration, and, to prove his contempt for such trivial covenants, he started by driving into Tyrone several thousand of O'Donnell's cattle that were lying conveniently at hand in Donegal, just across the river Mourne.† Kildare, Thomond and Clanricard were sent up to reason with him, but nothing resulted. He was invited to meet Sussex at Dundalk, but, conscious of his recent evil practices, he failed to keep the appointment. In place of meeting the Lord Lieutenant he made another raid into Donegal, drove off several thousand more cattle, laid the entire country waste, and on his way home fell on Maguire's harvesters at Belleek and killed 300 men, women and children.‡ By these two successive raids Donegal was reduced to absolute famine; no food was left, except berries and roots, and the people died in hundreds by the roadside.

With a curious inconsistency, the Irish chiefs, instead of finding fault with Shane for these villainous breaches of faith,

* Sir Richard Cox in his "*Hibernia Anglicana*" states that Elizabeth lent Shane £2,500, but this is to be doubted.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. VI., 75.

‡ Maguire to Sussex, Oct. 26th, 1562.

threw all the blame on the Queen ; never again, they said, would they believe an English Monarch's promise of protection. Sussex was completely unnerved by this unexpected and undeserved attack from those whom he had been doing his best to help and protect. " I pray God," he wrote in pious despair, " to rid me from serving with such as speak with their mouths what they dislike with their hearts, and put forth with their words that which they overthrow with their deeds."

Shane, having succeeded to his satisfaction in showing his contempt for any restrictions placed by the Queen on his jurisdiction of Ulster, now proceeded to make his own terms with those on whom he had been stamping his authority. By the terms of this arrangement, entered into September, 1663, Con O'Donnell was to enjoy his father's estate, and Calvagh was to remain a prisoner for the rest of his life. By a further triangular arrangement, in which the Antrim McDonnells were included, it was settled that Con was to marry Shane's daughter, Shane was to marry James McDonnell's daughter, and Sorley Boy was to provide 500 Scots for Shane when called upon to do so. Sorley Boy (or " the yellow-haired ") had now been ruler of the McDonnell settlements in the Route since the death of Colla in 1558. When Colla, whom Sussex in a letter to Boxall describes as the best of the family,* died, James McDonnell offered the captaincy of the Route to Alexander Oge, his second brother, and then to Angus ; but both refused. Finally Sorley Boy, the youngest, was forced to accept a position which was clearly none too popular with the family. The practical effect of the arrangement, above described, was—as, of course, intended—to considerably augment Shane's fighting strength ; and, with the increase in his power, came a corresponding increase in his insolence. The pose of loyalty, temporarily assumed as a convenience, was now contemptuously discarded, and Shane blossomed out once more as an openly-defined rebel. Sussex made an endeavour to correct this new mood by fitting out the usual punitive expedition, with which he started north in the summer of 1563. The army, however, was almost entirely composed of Irish, and these quarrelled so incessantly among themselves that no united action was possible, and Sussex had to return with nothing accomplished.

He reorganized his force, however, and, a fortnight later,

* Sussex to Boxall, June 3rd, 1558.

pushed westward as far as Clogher, but Shane never showed, and, after capturing a few cattle, he again returned to Armagh, having done little more than before. In an attempt to justify the cost of the expedition, Sussex now fortified the great church at Armagh, and, leaving 200 men there as a garrison, made his way back to Dublin. Sussex's performances had been barren enough, but his intentions were honestly polemic, and at his next essay he would, in all probability, have brought Shane within sight of submission, but—during his absence in the north—the Queen had been persuaded to an entire reversal of her policy. Cusack the Chancellor had been interviewing her, and, by the advice of this pusillanimous and weak-kneed politician, Shane was released from all his pledges. In pursuance of the same policy, the Queen's protection was withdrawn from all the minor chiefs who had previously relied on it. Cusack's argument was that the only way to govern Ireland was to propitiate the more powerful and turbulent among the chiefs, and to ignore such as were either too weak or too loyal to give trouble—a policy which, unfortunately, did not die with Cusack—but the real motive behind his advice was probably mercenary, for Shane was little less ready with a bribe than his successor in rebellion, Tyrone. Elizabeth was mainly induced to fall in with Cusack's view by her ingrained hatred of the Scots. Her intense jealousy of Mary Stuart had broadened out into a bitter rancour against all the subjects of that unhappy Queen. Sussex had the sense to see that, as far as Ulster was concerned, this was the foolish and narrow policy of a jealous woman. All the continuous troubles and unrest of Ulster, throughout Elizabethan days, might have been avoided had the Queen only treated the Scots as friends in place of enemies, and used them as her instruments for the pacification of Ulster, which, indeed, they were only too anxious to become. Sussex, in a report of his administration which was drawn up in 1562, advises that "the Queen should not only tolerate with the Scots of James Macdonald now in Ireland, but should gratify them in their requests, and, by all the means that may be, retain them in her service, which they earnestly seem to desire." But Elizabeth, though shrewd enough in most matters, was blind where her personal vanity was touched. Her terror was lest Mary Queen of Scots should establish so firm a footing in Ireland as to push her own interests to the detriment of

Elizabeth. So, in consultation with Cusack and in direct opposition to the advice of Sussex, she arranged that Shane should be taken into alliance against the intruders from Scotland. Cusack was accordingly sent over in a plenipotentiary capacity, not to displace Sussex, who still remained Lord Lieutenant, but with a special charter to put in operation any methods which he might deem advisable. Sussex raised no objection, for he was in bad health, miserably conscious of his failure, and delighted at the prospect of a holiday in England. Before leaving, however, he made one last attempt against Shane which did not add to his reputation. One, John Smith, was sent down into Tyrone, with instructions to bribe Neil Gray, a hanger-on of Shane, to get rid of the troublesome O'Neil by means of poison or otherwise.* The plot failed, and Sussex denied all complicity in it, but there is very little doubt that he was implicated, and possibly Cusack as well, but there is no evidence that Elizabeth had any knowledge of the plot.

Cusack lost no time in giving evidence of his new powers by releasing Shane from all his pledges and establishing formal peace with him till All Saints' Day. After the feast of All Saints it was agreed that the garrison was to be withdrawn from Armagh, and the great church was to cease to be a fortress. Shane was shrewd enough to base this demand on religious grounds, and, in support of his new character for piety, he undertook to forfeit £1,000 if he did not restore divine worship in Armagh church within a month from the date of its being restored to him.† Shane really does seem for a very short time to have made an effort in the right direction, by encouraging various branches of husbandry in his territories. In any case, the fact remains established that, during the next twelve months, his only recorded offence against outside society was the piratical seizure in Carlingford Harbour of a Scotch ship laden with wine, which was doubtless too tempting a prize for any O'Neil to allow to pass his gates.

* Carew MSS., 388.

† Cal. State Papers, Nov. 1563.

CHAPTER II

Death of Manus O'Donnell—Culoagh's release—His appeal to Arnold and Cusack—His final appeal to the Queen—Shane captures Donegal Castle—His tortures of Con McCalvagh—His defeat by Sorley Boy at Coleraine—Shane's secret service system—The Battle of Glentor—Defeat of the Scots—Death of James McDonnell—Sorley Boy a prisoner—Shane captures Dunseverick and Dunluce—Jubilation in Dublin at Shane's victory—Shane accepts ransom for his prisoners—Elizabeth's indignation—Sir Henry Sidney arrives as deputy—Shane captures Dundalk, but is expelled again—Sidney's expedition to the north—Randolph arrives at Derry with a fleet—Sidney's conquering tour of Donegal—Calvagh reinstated as the O'Donnell—His death—Randolph's troubles at Derry—Privations of the garrison—Defeat of Shane at Lifford—Randolph's death—Evacuation of Derry—Defeat of Shane at Fersatmore—He surrenders to the McDonnells—His death and character.

IN February, 1564, old Manus O'Donnell died in Lifford Castle at the age of seventy-one. Shane seems to have had a certain regard for the old man. It may be that his friendship for Manus was only a reflection of his inveterate hatred for Calvagh, for the father and son had always been at enmity. But, in any event, the fact stands out that Lifford Castle was left unmolested so long as Manus occupied it, but no sooner was he dead than Shane instantly started to bargain with Calvagh for its possession. This wretched man was still a prisoner, but he was now promised his release on the condition of handing over Lifford Castle and the lands of Inishowen to Shane. Calvagh, having little option in the matter, agreed, and the gyves, which he had now worn for close on three years, were knocked off. His wife, however, who was by this time the mother of two sons of Shane, was still kept prisoner with the idea of extracting a ransom from the Macleans for her release. As a matter of fact Shane did not get Lifford Castle, for the garrison in occupation—either acting on their own initiative or else under Calvagh's secret orders—sturdily refused to give it up, and Shane was not at the moment in a position to take it by force. His fury at this unexpected rebuff was not lessened by the fact of his late prisoner being

beyond the reach of his vengeance. Calvagh, as a matter of fact, had very wisely taken himself off to Dublin, where he laid his piteous case before the Lords Justices Arnold and Cusack, who were the Queen's representatives at the moment. From neither of these time-servers did he get much satisfaction. Arnold was a mere puppet in the hands of Cusack, and the latter, acting on his fixed principle of never helping anyone who was too weak to be troublesome or too poor to bribe him, turned a deaf ear to all poor Calvagh's woes. With a casuistic avoidance of the main issue, he read O'Donnell a lecture on his own past ill-treatment of his father Manus, and tried to argue that he was now only reaping as he had sown.

Calvagh was dreadfully upset by this reception, and, when he at length realized that the verdict was unfavourable, "he burst out into such a weeping as when he would speak he could not."* He had no intention, however, of accepting the Lords Justices' ruling as final, and, in his resolve to push his case to the last Court of Appeal, took measures for transferring himself to England. His intention was discovered, and he was definitely forbidden to leave the country, but he nevertheless managed somehow to elude detention and slip across, and, making his way in miserable poverty to London, laid his case before the Queen herself. Elizabeth heard him very patiently, and at the end of his interpreted recital expressed herself sorry for him, and gave him money for his immediate needs, for he complained that "no man would trust him for so much as a meal." At the same time she told Calvagh quite plainly that she herself was powerless to decide his case, which must be adjudicated through the regular channels in Ireland, but that she would instruct Arnold to make him a fixed allowance on his return to Ulster. Calvagh thanked her with all humility, but he had no intention of returning to Ireland just yet. He thoroughly distrusted Arnold and Cusack, both of whom he strongly suspected of being in the pay of his deadly enemy Shane, and he determined to remain on the safe side of the Channel till Sidney went over as Deputy, of which there was at the time much talk. He accordingly took himself off to Scotland, where he remained as the guest of the Earl of Argyle till the news reached him of the definite transfer of authority in Ireland into the hands of Sidney.

* Wrothe to Dudley, July 23rd, 1564.

Shane, baulked of his hoped-for vengeance on Calvagh, determined that the son should suffer in place of the father, and to this end hatched various schemes for getting possession of the person of young Con. Fortune again favoured him. Con—who considered himself the natural heir to the Chiefry of Tyrconnell—set out in the early months of 1564 to attack Hugh McHugh O'Donnell, who had taken possession of Donegal Castle. Con met with but little success at first, but he finally prevailed on Egnechan and Con O'Donnell, first cousins of Hugh McHugh and members of the garrison, to betray the castle into his hands.* The plot was carried through without a hitch, and the garrison—completely taken by surprise—was easily disposed of. The victors thereupon laid themselves out to celebrate the event in the traditional way by a two or three days' earouse. In the midst of this pleasant orgy they were surprised by Shane and Hugh McManus (Calvagh's half-brother), who had been kept fully informed of all that was going on inside the walls; in fact the circumstances strongly suggest that there was double treachery, and that Con and Egnechau, having first of all betrayed Hugh for the purpose of getting the younger Con within the walls, then in turn betrayed him to Shane, in accordance with a prearranged plan. In any case, the victors now became the vanquished. Con took his father's place as Shane's prisoner, and Hugh McManus had himself proclaimed the O'Donnell. Shane at once began to torture his new captive, with a view to forcing him to give up Lifford Castle. The high strategic importance of this place lay in its position, which commanded the only passage of the Mourne by which Donegal could be entered from the east without the aid of boats, for the river here was always fordable at all heights of the water. Below Lifford the Mourne spreads out into the broad tidal estuary of the Foyle, while above Lifford the river comes down as a heavy turbulent stream only fordable at one or two spots in the driest weather.

To avoid further torture, Con agreed to surrender the Castle, but the garrison within the walls again refused to give it up. This time Shane, having more leisure, deliberately sat down to invest the place with a force which ate the country bare for miles round, and finally starved the garrison into submission. During these operations Tirlough Luineach, the tanist, worked

* Four Masters.

heart and soul with his chief, helping him both by personal service in the field, and by placing at his disposal his Castle at Strabane, locally known as "the Salmon."*

Part of Cusack's scheme of compromise with Shane had been on the understanding, and indeed on the reasonable expectation, that the O'Neil, if left alone by the English, would concentrate his energies against the Antrim Scots. The wily Chancellor knew well that, whatever the result, the advantage would remain with the English; for it was clearly easier and cheaper to encourage the O'Neils and McDonnells to destroy one another rather than that the Government should have to fight them both. He accordingly represented to Shane that he would not be viewed with strong favour by Her Majesty unless, in return for his immunity from interference by the Government, he undertook some kind of enterprise against the Scots. Such a proposition was quite in tune with Shane's personal ambition. His recent successes had filled him with the idea that he was invincible, and the suggestion of ravaging a neighbour with the approval of the Government was far too novel and attractive to be neglected. He got together his fighting forces, and in August, 1564, set out towards the east with a view to putting Cusack's proposition into practice. He ferried his army across the flooded Bann at Coleraine and occupied the strong stone-built Dominican Friary on the east bank. Shane himself, with his customary prudence, remained on the western shore in the ruined Castle of Culrath (Coleraine), which he entrenched and fortified. With him was his friend and firm ally, Terence Donnelly, Dean of Armagh. From this safe distance the two watched the indignant Sorley Boy arrive in the early morning with a force which was estimated at 800 men. The McDonnell lost no time in attacking, and when he did attack, attacked with irresistible vigour. "The Scots," according to the subsequent report of the Dean of Armagh, "fought like madmen."† They lost 90 men before they finally carried the place by assault and put an end to the invaders. Shane's mounted men alone escaped by swimming their horses across the Bann. O'Neil himself had, as usual, galloped off into safety at the first suggestion of defeat.

In April of the following year Shane renewed his attempt

* Camden's "Elizabeth."

† Terence Donolly to Arnold, Sept. 10th, 1564.

upon the Scotch settlement, and this time his plans were better laid. Shane's success in life was mainly due to the perfection of his system of espionage. He had, it is true, during the years '63, '64 and '65 the unfailing support and encouragement of Cusack and Arnold, who, in the absence of the Lord Lieutenant, practically ruled Ireland, but this in itself was not sufficient to account for the almost unvarying success of a man who apparently lacked all the elements of greatness. He was a sot and a debauchee; we know that he was seldom sober after midday, and at times lay in a drunken stupor for days. He had no pretensions to generalship in the field, and on more than one occasion he unmistakably proved himself a very sorry coward, and yet his success in extending his boundaries and subjugating his enemies is beyond contention, and for this he had to thank the efficiency of his secret service. Sussex was fully aware of his enemy's chief source of strength. "There can be no matter moved that toucheth Shane but he knoweth it either before it be concluded or shortly after,"* he wrote to Cecil in 1563. For this, however, Sussex had mainly himself to blame, for he allowed Shane to make systematic use of his chief spy Terence Donnelly, Dean of Armagh, to carry all messages that passed between him and Dublin. The Donnellys were Shane's foster-brothers, *i.e.*, he had been put out to foster with one of the sept, a ceremony which, in the eyes of the Irish, constituted a far more sacred bond than real brotherhood, or indeed than any blood relationship. Four of the sept, *viz.*: James, Edmund, Donnell and Manus, were members of Shane's inner Council, and the entire sept acted as his secret agents. "Shane's strength," Phety-place, the pirate, explained while awaiting sentence of death, "lies not in men but in subtlety; his surety not in the nobility nor yet in his kinsmen, but in his foster-brothers, the Donnellys, about 300 gentlemen. His warrior, indeed, is Tirlough Luineach."†

The pirate's estimate of his man and of his source of strength is probably a true one. Donegal was subjugated not by force of arms, but by Shane's ability, owing to exact information, to successively kidnap the only two men who could effectively hold the country together. In each case the seizure was effected without a blow being struck. His success again against the

* Sussex to Cecil, Jan. 30th, 1563.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. XX., 92.

Scots in 1565—though not achieved without fighting—was mainly due to the exactitude of his information.

The Scotch colony in the Route, though it had pushed out its boundaries to south and west, was as yet numerically insignificant. Its chief source of strength lay in its proximity to Scotland, and in its consequent power of drawing reinforcements from that country at will; but this closeness of touch with Scotland was also its weakness. The Route was a McDonnell colony; but the home, the interests and the main resources of the clan were still in Scotland, and these—no less than the Route—had to be protected from depredations. So they came and went as necessity demanded. The mercenaries who fought their tribal battles for the Irish chiefs were equally migratory Scots, but these had no connection with the Route colony. They simply fought for the chief who hired them. Fighting was their profession, and they would just as readily have fought against the McDonnells as with them, if the conditions of their contract had demanded it. Shane always kept a few thousands of these mercenary Scots about him as a body-guard. Their fighting reputation was high. Sir Francis Knollys in 1566 estimated that “300 of the Scots are harder to be vanquished than 600 of the Irish,”* and the strength of the Irish chieftains in their inter-tribal battles was in exact ratio to the number of Scots they could afford to keep in their pay. The native kerne and gallowglasses had little value as actual combatants, though unrivalled as scouts, foragers and cattle-drivers.

In April, 1566, the Route colony was exceptionally weak, and Shane was quick to be informed and to take advantage. James and Alexander Oge, with a strong fighting force, were over in Cantyre, and, of the five surviving brothers, Angus and Sorley Boy were the only two in Ulster at the moment. Shane was quick to seize his opportunity, and, having rapidly concentrated his force at Edenduffcarrick on the north-east shore of Lough Neagh, he swept down on the two brothers. The McDonnell outposts detected his advance, and beacon fires went up from all the mountain tops as a signal to their kinsmen across the water. James McDonnell, away in Antrim, saw the fires, and knew their meaning only too well. Leaving instructions with his brother Alexander to collect all the men

* Knollys to Cecil, May, 1566.

he could and follow with all possible speed, he leapt into a boat, and, with a handful of followers, set sail for Ulster. The wind, however, was unfavourable and progress was slow. The first sight that greeted James' eyes on sighting land were the flames arising from his fine new house in Red Bay. This house James had built only four years before; a hundred masons and carpenters had been imported from Cantyre for the purpose, and it was reckoned the finest structure in Ulster. Worse, however, was to follow. On reaching land, he found that his brother Angus had already been killed. Sorley Boy was still holding out, standing at bay with his back to the sea at Glentor, near the site of the present-day Ballycastle. James managed to effect a junction with his youngest brother, but the reinforcements which he brought were a mere handful and had little effect upon the issue. Shane's forces outnumbered the McDonnells by over two to one, and the latter were all but annihilated. Five hundred or so were killed, James fell severely wounded into Shane's hands, and Sorley Boy was also taken prisoner. The next day Alexander Oge arrived with nine hundred men, but all was by that time over, and he returned to Scotland.

The capture of James McDonnell of the Isles was of immense political importance to Shane, and, had the chief lived, the Route and the Glynns would have remained as effectually under Shane's heel as Donegal was owing to the capture of Con. However, within two days James had succumbed to his wounds, and Shane's aims were defeated. He still, however, had Sorley Boy in his hands, and nineteen others of importance, whom he subsequently ransomed, with considerable financial profit to himself,* and to the intense annoyance of Queen Elizabeth. Shane followed up his victory by successively capturing the two strongholds of Dunseverick and Dunluce. While he was investing the latter place, Sorley Boy was kept three days and nights without food, in order to induce the garrison to surrender. Sorley Boy gallantly bade them hold out and not mind him, but to save their Chief further torture the garrison surrendered and were all immediately put to the sword.†

Shane's success caused immense jubilation in Dublin. The

* Elizabeth to Sidney, Nov. 1565.

† Gerot Fleming to Cusack, June, 1565.

good news was received as usual through the medium of the Dean of Armagh; and the Privy Council, by means of the same messenger, sent back hearty congratulations, coupled with inquiries as to the best means of exterminating the remainder of the Scots left in Ulster. Shane was two months in answering, but finally, in August, he sent back the announcement that the Scots had been wholly expelled the Kingdom, and that all their towns and fortresses were now at the disposal of Her Majesty. On this occasion, Shane, with a considerable force at his heels, accompanied his messenger, the Dean of Armagh, as far as Newry, which important place he coolly took possession of and filled with his own men. This last act proved Shane's undoing. It was in itself an act of overt insolence, and it was only one of many misdemeanours with which Shane was simultaneously charged. It transpired that the Earl of Argyle had ransomed the nineteen important McDonnell prisoners whom Shane had captured, paying very high sums for their release. These were now back in the Route, and once more building up their strength. Sorley Boy was still a prisoner, but Alexander Oge and his nephew, Gillaspick, had come over in his place, and the Route, reinforced with fighting men from Scotland, was much as it had been before Shane's invasion. All this greatly incensed the Queen. She wrote to Dublin in the most indignant terms, pointing out that Shane should have handed over his prisoners to the Government and not have trafficked them for money, and added that he was at once to evacuate Newry Castle or feel the weight of her displeasure. Shane, who now thought himself invincible, laughed at the great Queen. What he had won, he said, he had won with the sword, and with the sword he would keep it. His past successes perhaps justified him in his arrogance, but he miscalculated one factor in the case. On June 13th, 1566, Sir Henry Sidney had arrived in Ireland as Deputy in place of Sussex, or, rather, in place of Arnold and Cusack, for Sussex was seldom in Ireland; and, in the Queen's new representative, Shane had to deal with a man of very different calibre to the two Lords Justices. Sidney, who was Sussex's brother-in-law, was no novice in Irish matters. He had close on ten years' experience, first as Lord Justice, and later as Vice-Treasurer. Both Arnold and Cusack intrigued with all the statecraft of which they were such masters

to be appointed in Sussex's place, but Elizabeth's remarkable sagacity saved her from an error which might for ever have ruined her cause in Ireland. The Queen personally disliked Sidney, but she recognized his extraordinary merits, and that he was an administrator of a very high order is beyond question. All the Irish Annalists join in singing his praises in a high key, and though such praises might be construed into *prima facie* evidence of corrupt relations existing between the Deputy and the Chiefs, there is no internal evidence in the State correspondence of the day to substantiate any such view.

The irritation of the Queen at Shane's commercial use of his victory is easily understood. The Scotch colony in Antrim was a growing menace to the English in Ireland. A scheme was fast taking shape for the formation of a second Pale in Antrim, which was to be planted with a colony of English settlers. The idea had first originated in 1562 with Sir Thomas Smith, one of the Queen's Secretaries, but fell through for the moment owing to the initial difficulty of expelling the Scots. Then Cusack unfolded to the Queen his plan of encouraging Shane, who was the best destructive medium in Ulster, to exterminate the Scots, after which it was reckoned that the projected settlement could be easily carried out. This policy of treating Shane as an ally instead of as an enemy had now continued for three years—ever since Shane's return from England, in fact. It was a policy which was justifiable, and perhaps even desirable, if the ultimate goal aimed at was the expulsion of the Scots with a view to clearing the land for an English plantation. But the drawback to the scheme was that it necessarily gave Shane a free hand to do as he would in other directions. In the words of the contemporary State Papers: "Shane's chief policy was enmity of the Scots. This gained for him in many of his misdeeds [in other directions] the connivance of the statesmen who governed Ireland." Here we have Cusack and Arnold very plainly indicated, as in no extant historical records is there any suggestion of connivance between Shane and Sidney.

After Shane's victory in the Route in the spring of 1565, the Queen had every reason to flatter herself that Cusack's policy had been justified by results, and that the Scotch element had been finally got rid of. When, therefore, she found that Shane was merely turning his success to his own financial

advantage, and—worse still—was releasing in return for ransom nineteen of the more important McDonnells, she was naturally much incensed. When, in addition, the O'Neil coolly annexed Newry Castle, her patience gave way, and the fiat went forth that Shane was to be brought to his senses. This, however, thanks to Cusack's three years of encouragement, was far from an easy matter. Shane had taken advantage of his immunity from Government interference to gradually build up his strength, and he now boasted that he could put 4,000 foot and 1,000 horse into the field. Sidney, who was anxious, if possible, to come to a friendly understanding without resorting to more drastic measures, on learning of the Queen's resolution, sent Shane several invitations to come to Dundalk and talk things over quietly. Shane, however, conscious of having sacrificed the Government schemes to his own greed for money, declined to run the risk of attending a pacific conference; but in a sense—though not in the intended sense—he obeyed the summons, for he arrived at Dundalk with a large body of horse, devastated all the country for miles round, and even pushed his way into the town itself, not as a penitent, but as a conqueror. This latter rôle, however, he was not able to sustain for long. John Fitzwilliam, the Governor, collected all the local forces available, and, aided by Sarsfield, the Mayor of Dublin, who arrived with a contingent from the Pale, he ejected the intruder with considerable loss.

Shane, like a naughty child sure of punishment, now withdrew to the fastness of Glenconkein,* where he hid himself and awaited results. He had burnt his boats and he knew it. All the make-believe of the past three years was at an end. He had defied the great Queen, and he had sufficient experience of Elizabeth to know that this surely meant trouble.

The trouble, in the shape of Sidney, started for the north in August, 1566, accompanied by Shane's two bitterest enemies, Calvagh O'Donnell and Shane Maguire, and a well-equipped force of 1,700 foot. The new Deputy departed from the fixed traditions of the Island in avoiding, as far as possible, wanton damage to property. There was no systematic

* Loughinshollin, or Glenconkein as it was then called, was, strictly speaking, part of Brian Carragh's country. Its popularity as a place of retreat was on account of its dense forests and of the facilities it afforded for further retreat if necessary into the wild mountains between Dungiven and Newtown.

butchery of stock or burning of crops, except south of Clogher, where Sidney, as a mark of the Queen's displeasure, burned the country of the usurping Maguire, who was in close league with Shane. The route which Sidney chose was through Armagh, across the Blackwater at Benburb, where he totally destroyed Shane's chief Castle, which stood on the brow of the steep bluff from which the place takes its name. From there he passed on to Clogher, and from Clogher to Omagh, where Maguire suddenly died. After leaving Omagh, Sidney scaled the slopes of Slieve Trim, and passed across the head of Lough Leaghair to Castlederg. Here Shane put in an unexpected appearance at the head of 5,000 men, but apparently only for purposes of demonstration, for he made no attempt to give battle, and disappeared again as quickly as he had come.

It is perhaps too much to say that Sidney's Ulster invasion of 1566 was the first Government expedition of the kind that evidenced any intelligence on the part of its organizer, but it unquestionably showed a marked advance in the first principles of generalship over anything that had gone before. The outstanding feature of the expedition was the profitable use to which Sidney turned the Foyle estuary. It was by no means the first time that the possibilities of the Foyle had been recognized; Sussex, for instance, in 1561 had co-operated with a victualling fleet which had been sent round to the Foyle, but in his case the fleet, having performed its function, returned whence it had come. There was no question at that time of the establishment of a permanent base at Derry. This idea was left for Sidney to conceive and carry out. He seems to have been the first to realize that which seems so absurdly obvious to the modern mind, viz., that the strength of all the O'Neil rebellions lay in the twenty days' march which separated them from Dublin, in the precarious voyage of the expeditionary force, and in the ague and dysentery which invariably made their appearance among the troops after a fortnight's exposure to damp and privations. It was evident to Sidney that the only solution of these difficulties lay in the establishment of a victualling base in or adjacent to O'Neil's own country. The natural spot indicated by all the circumstances was Derry. Derry practically commanded all Donegal and Tyrone, and, as the Ulster chiefs had no maritime forces, the sea route that led to it was free from all the perils to commissariat that lurked

in the hazel and holly scrub through which the rough horse-track, known as the Northern Road, wound its way.

Sidney had immense difficulty in persuading Elizabeth to fall in with his scheme, her objection to his proposal being on the grounds of the heavy expense involved, and the uncertainty as to the advantages being commensurate with the cost. Finally, however, her grudging consent was obtained; and it was arranged that, while Sidney was working north through the bogs and mountains of Tyrone, Colonel Edward Randolph, Master of Her Majesty's Ordnance in England, should sail round from Bristol to the Foyle with a co-operating fleet. For once in a way there were no unforeseen delays. The fleet carried seven hundred men, provisions, treasure, twenty butts of sack and two surgeons,* and Randolph managed to bring the whole of his charge safely to port. He was unfortunately much delayed at first by contrary winds, which, to his great distress, frustrated his pet scheme of reaping (or destroying) Shane's harvest before his people could get it in. By the time he arrived it had all been cut, and was hidden away out of his reach in woods and caves. Randolph left his ships and the bulk of his cargo at Derry, and on foot marched up from there to Lifford, where he met Sidney, who had followed the river Derg down to its junction with the Mourne. Together the two, with all their men, waded across the river to Strabane, where they made friends with Tirlough Luineach, and from that point followed the right bank of the Foyle down till they were opposite Derry, when they were ferried across in some of Randolph's small boats.

Sidney converted the old church at Derry into the main fortress, and, leaving six hundred foot and fifty horse with Randolph, passed on into Donegal by way of Raphoe and the Barnesmore Gap. Here he was joined by O'Boyle, McSweeney Fanad (*i.e.*, of Fanad) and O'Gallagher. O'Dogherty, the Inishowen Chieftain, remained behind to co-operate with Randolph. A triumphal tour of Donegal followed. No opposition was encountered, and the lands of Tyrconnell were formally restored to Calvagh, together with the lordship over O'Connor Sligo, who, by the decree of the Deputy, was henceforth to pay him rent. By the terms of a supplemental agreement Calvagh was articted to rebuild Castle Finn for the use of Hugh

* Cal. State Papers, June 1566.

McManus, who, in the meanwhile, was given a royal warrant to occupy the castles of Belleek and Bondries, made forfeit by the misdemeanours of the usurping Maguire. Calvagh, poor man, did not live long to enjoy his recovered revenues and honours, for, while riding one day from Lifford to Derry, his horse stumbled and threw him, breaking his neck. His last words were an exhortation to his followers to be true to the Queen. The moment Calvagh was dead, his half-brother Hugh—who had usurped the title of O'Donnell upon Shane's capture of Con—had himself formally invested at Kilmacrenan.

There can be no question as to the soundness of Sidney's policy of establishing a base at Derry; the practical experience of 350 years has proved how very right he was, but the first attempt ended in sad disaster, in some degree owing to the unfortunate death of Calvagh. That loyal subject had undertaken, in his capacity as the O'Donnell, to supply the Derry garrison with forty oxen every week, or in place of each ox, six sheep, or four pigs of a year old, as well as oats and straw for their horses.* These exact and carefully-phrased conditions would no doubt have been faithfully carried out had the good old Calvagh lived. Hugh, however, who succeeded him—though bitterly hating Shane—had little love for Sidney, who had championed Calvagh's cause against his own. The supplies ceased, and in October Randolph reported that he was unable by any means to get sufficient provisions to keep the men alive. To add to the trials of the garrison, O'Cahan's herds could be plainly seen grazing in tantalizing security on the far shore of the Foyle—painfully inaccessible to the hungry men who eyed them across the water. The food troubles were mainly caused by the exorbitance of the prices demanded by the natives for all local produce. These prices were so fantastically rapacious that fair barter became an impossibility, and there was no half-way house left between starvation and the forcible seizure of corn and cattle from those who were their nominal allies. This last course was contrary to the explicit orders of Sidney, who had been unable to foresee the unreasonable greed of the natives, and who had made no provision against such a contingency. Randolph, however, who was considered one of the most capable commanders in Her Majesty's service, was a man of unbounded energy and

* Carew MSS., Oct. 1566.

resource, and not easily to be daunted by difficulties. As long as he lived, means were found to keep the garrison supplied with the bare necessities of life. It was not till after his death that the real pinch was felt. This catastrophe fell about as follows: Shane, whose information was always exact and up to date, had immediate news of Sidney's departure into Donegal with the bulk of the fighting men, and he quite properly concluded that this was the right moment at which to strike a sudden blow at the unwelcome English settlement which bade fair to take root at his doors. Early in November, accordingly, he assembled a force, which Cox, the seventeenth-century historian, estimates at 2,500 foot and 300 horse,* with which he safely crossed the river at Lifford. Randolph, however, had received word of his intention, and no sooner had the invaders set foot on the Donegal side, than they were attacked by the Derry garrison, and, in spite of the disparity in numbers, completely routed. Four hundred of Shane's men were killed on the spot, and the rest were driven to take refuge in the neighbouring woods, where numbers more were eventually hunted down and killed by O'Dogherty and his Inishowen men, who had remained as onlookers till the issue was no longer doubtful. Only one man was killed on the English side, but that one was Randolph. Randolph's loss at once made itself felt. He was the mainstay of the entire settlement, and Captain Vaughan, who succeeded temporarily to the command, had by no means the same organizing powers. Great privations began to be experienced, and all through the winter the usual diseases attendant upon exposure and improper feeding made themselves felt. In December Captain Saintloo arrived by sea with provisions, and took over the command from Vaughan. The spirits of the garrison revived considerably, and in February a successful raid was made into O'Cahan's country, in the course of which 1,000 cattle and 700 ponies were rounded up: but disease was still rampant among the garrison, and in March Saintloo wrote home that, out of the original 600, only 200 were fit for service. Of his officers Captain Schryven had died and Captain Wilsford was "sore sick." The crowning calamity occurred in April, when, by a piece of unexplained carelessness, a spark from the blacksmith's forge found its way into the magazine. Thirty men

* "Hibernia Anglicana." ..

were killed outright by the explosion, and Captain Gourlay, we are told, had his leg blown off, but subsequently recovered.* Nothing remained now but to evacuate the station, as the only effective means of defence was gone. It was agreed that every man should shift for himself. Under this arrangement "Captain George Harvey and his troop of forty horse, being loth to kill their horses, took the resolution to march round through Tyrconnell and Connaught, and valiantly performed it, though they were forced to march four days through the enemy's country and were pursued by a multitude of rebels, yet they got safe to Dublin, to the great admiration of Deputy and Council."†

Saintloo himself, and the remainder, took their lives in their hands and rode clean through the enemy's country to Carriekfergus, which they reached in safety, though after many perilous adventures. Thus ended the first attempted settlement of Derry.

In the meanwhile the tide of Shane's fortunes was beginning slowly to ebb. At the beginning of the year, Alexander Oge had written offering the Queen the services of his clan against the great rebel. Elizabeth, yielding to the strong representation of Sidney, grudgingly gave her consent. In December, 1566, in pursuance of this arrangement, McDonnell came over from Cantyre with 1,200 men, landed at the Glynn, and—crossing the Bann—killed 60 of Shane's people and rounded up many cattle. The blow, however, which was for ever to shatter Shane's fortunes was dealt by his one-time firm ally, Hugh McManus O'Donnell, now—since Calvagh's death—the official head of the clan. Hugh, it will be remembered, had invoked the aid of Shane against Calvagh and his son Con. Shane had readily responded, but, after successively capturing both the father and the son, he had coolly proclaimed himself lord of Donegal in place of Hugh. Hugh never forgave this breach of faith, and when Shane "did very cruelly kill O'Donnell's brother Manus McManus and 140 of his men,"‡ the O'Donnell openly changed sides and ranged himself among the enemies of O'Neil. To accentuate and give practical expression to his hostility, he made overtures for the hand of James McDonnell's widow, commonly known as Lady

* Cal. State Papers, April, 1567.

† "Hibernia Anglicana."

‡ Bishop of Meath to Cecil, April, 1566.

Agnes Campbell, who, he made little doubt, would gladly unite with him in order to be revenged on Shane for the death of her man. The lady, however, to his great surprise, declined the honour, just as she had declined Shane's proposal two years before, and—as in Shane's case—gave him instead a daughter (Ineenduv), who had no greater love for Shane than had her mother. This black-haired lady was destined in time to become the mother of Hugh Roe, and the most prominent female figure in Ulster history. The O'Donnell was quite pleased with the alliance, and, at the instigation of his young wife, he swooped down on the Strabane country in the spring of 1567 and collected much spoil, with which he returned in triumph to Letterkenny.

Shane's spirit, however, was not yet broken. Early in May he set out in pursuit of the O'Donnell, crossed the Foyle below Lifford, and passing on to the head of Lough Swilly, crossed easily enough by the Fersat at Soloughmore, about two miles to the east of Letterkenny, the tide being out at the time. O'Donnell, with his cousin, Hugh Oge McHugh, was at Ardin-garry with 400 men when he learned of Shane's invasion. With a decision of character of which he gave no evidence on any other occasion, and which was probably in the present instance vicarious, O'Donnell determined on an immediate attack. He was very greatly outnumbered by Shane's forces, but the disparity in numbers did not in any way affect the result. At the first onslaught, Shane's men broke and fled in confusion down to the shores of Lough Swilly, where the tide by now was so high as to render the passage impossible. Caught in a trap, they fell easy victims to the weapons of the pursuing O'Donnells. The slaughter was tremendous, for of those that fled from the sword into the waves the greater part were drowned. The Four Masters, who were Donegal men, in an optimistic estimate, place the number of killed at 1,300, but Sidney's figure of 613 is more probably correct. Thomas Lancaster, afterwards Bishop of Armagh, had reliable information that very few escaped. Shane himself narrowly avoided being taken, and the Donegal Annalists record that, as a result of the disaster, "his senses and reason became deranged." This conclusion was probably deduced from his subsequent behaviour, which certainly savoured of lunacy. On the O'Donnell side the only loss of importance in the Battle

of Fersatmore was that of Neil McDonough, who—according to the same authority—was killed by his own people.

The great Shane's talons being now effectually clipped, the neighbouring jackals were not slow to turn the opportunity to their own advantage. Raids were made upon the now defenceless country of Tyrone from all quarters of the Province, of which not the least successful was that of Art McBaron, Ferdoragh's eldest illegitimate son, who made an invasion from Carrickfergus, where he was at the time the guest of Captain Piers, and carried off a thousand head of cattle.*

Shane was now very near the end of his tether. His army and his prestige were gone, and, with the loss of these, had gone his friends. On every side of him were enemies to his own race, men whom he had irrevocably estranged by various acts of cruelty or despotism. Beyond loomed the great army of the Deputy, the cells of Dublin Castle, and possibly the scaffold. In this extremity, and acting on the advice of his priest, Neale McKeever,† he fled with a meagre following of fifty men across Tyrone into the McDonnell country, and there gave himself up to Alexander Oge. This was little short of an act of despair, for Shane had the blood of both James and Angus on his hands, to say nothing of the destruction of the family house at Red Bay two years before. Sorley Boy was possibly his friend, though even he could hardly have forgotten his three days and nights of starvation, and the resulting butchery of the faithful Dunluce garrison; but from the other brothers, and from James' widow, he had little mercy to expect and still less help. However, it would seem that, in spite of the feuds between the two houses, he was at first well received. He was hospitably entertained at Cushenden at a banquet, the sumptuousness of which was probably his undoing; for both hosts and guests got heated with wine and indulged in boasting and mutual recrimination, out of which arose a scuffle, in which Shane was killed.

Shane died on June 2nd, 1567. His body was respectfully laid out in the McDonnells' private chapel and then buried, but Captain Piers, on learning of the event, rode across from Carrickfergus, dug up the body, which had been four days in the ground, cut off the head and sent it to Dublin "pickled

* Thomas Lancaster to Cecil, May 31st, 1567.

† Carew MSS., 1567, Appendix 288.

in a pipkin," for which he received the thousand marks at which the head was priced by the Government.*

Shane is generally supposed to have been born in 1530, but this is probably incorrect, for in 1569 he had a grandson, Con Boy McHenry, who was at any rate old enough to be in command of a raiding party which Tirlough Luineach sent into the McMahon country. Even allowing for the extreme precocity of Irish marriages in the sixteenth century,† this suggests strongly that he was born some years before the date generally fixed. Other facts tend to confirm this view. His father, Con Bacagh, was born in 1484, and nothing is less likely than that the old chief should have been forty-six years of age by the time his eldest legitimate son was born.

Shane left seven sons, Henry, Con, Shane Oge, Hugh, Art, Brian and Tirlough.‡ Fitzwilliam, in a letter to Burleigh, written shortly after Shane's death, makes the statement that "they were all save one of the Scottish race and greatly beloved, and would no doubt attempt to succeed Tirlough Luineach." On the other hand, Nicholas Maltby, Governor of Connaught, describes them as "the most venomous and hateful persons of this land." The one son of Shane who was of pure Irish blood was Shane Oge, whose mother had been Margaret O'Donnell. The mother of the two eldest had been a McDonnell of Cautyre, while Hugh, Art and Brian were by Catherine McLean, Countess of Argyle (Calvagh O'Donnell's imprisoned wife).§ Tirlough, the youngest, was the son of Catherine McDonnell, daughter of James McDonnell of the Route and the sister of Inceenduv. Shane's original idea had been to marry James McDonnell's widow, the Lady Agnes Campbell, and, with that end in view, he had turned out into the cold that most ill-fated woman, Catherine, Countess of Argyle. Lady Agnes, however, declined the honour for herself, but was sufficiently attracted by the prospect

* Carew MSS. Sidney to Walsingham, March, 1583. Hill's "McDonnells of Antrim."

† Patrick Condon, a prominent political figure, was born when his mother was eleven years of age. Cal. State Papers, Vol. 203, 106.

‡ Cal. State Papers, Vol. LXV., 6-II.

§ See "Book of Howth," p. 209. Camden says that both Henry and Shane were by Margaret O'Donnell, but this is impossible. See Cal. State Papers, Vol. 207, Part II., 138.

of the political alliance to give him her daughter Catherine instead.*

Shane O'Neil, unattractive though he appears as an individual, was undoubtedly a remarkable personality, inasmuch as he managed to extend his sway over practically the whole of Ulster, and that in spite of repeated and ignominious defeats in the field. This success—as has already been explained—was mainly due to the perfection of his secret-service system. In his own person he was a repulsive character. As far as can be gathered from contemporary chronicles, he had no virtues. He was brutal in his treatment of his wives, and barbarously cruel to his prisoners. He tortured and cut off the ear of a messenger of his who failed to explain his meaning successfully to Sussex. He was grotesquely vain, and an inveterate liar, drunk every afternoon, and a great glutton. Camden relates that, after his more violent excesses, he would cause himself to be placed in a pit with loose earth thrown up to his chin to cool his system.† He never kept his word except when it suited him, and he was totally devoid of personal courage. O'Donnell wrote to the Queen in 1562 that “in Shane's promises there is no assurance, nor trust in his word, with as many other vices as a man of his sort may have.”‡

In the “Book of Howth” we find the following curious description of him: “He was a great surfeiter, a great spender, and cruel and extreme in all his affairs, no man his like, and liberal in nothing but in housekeeping. A courteous, loving and a good companion to those whom he loved, being strangers to his country. They said he was the last that could give the charge upon his foes; and the first that would flee; but he could well procure his men to do well.”

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 207, Part II., 138. See also Sidney to Privy Council, April, 1566.

† Camden's “Elizabeth.”

‡ O'Donnell to Elizabeth, 1572.

CHAPTER III

Proposed Plantation schemes in Antrim—Capt. Piers' truce with Sorley Boy—Sorley Boy's faithful observance of the compact—Scots evacuate Ulster—Fitzwilliam's negotiations with Tirlough Luineach—Character of Tirlough Luineach—He proposes for Lady Bagenal's sister—Tirlough Luineach raids the McMahon's—Death of Con Boy McHenry—Defeat of Tirlough Luineach—His marriage with Lady Agnes—Sir Thomas Smith's Plantation Scheme—His negotiations with Sir Brian McPhelin—Return of Scots to Ulster—Indifference of the Irish—Hostility towards English Plantation—Arrival of Smith—Murder of Henry Savage—Smith's administration at Carrickfergus—Discontent of the townsmen—Sir Brian burns the town—Immigration of the townsmen.

NO sooner was Shane dead than the Queen's mind reverted to her pet scheme of planting Antrim and Down with a colony of English. She makes her views on the subject quite clear in her two letters to Sidney of June 11th and July 6th, 1567. There appears to have been at the first no idea of forcible seizure. The country it was proposed to plant was for the most part very thinly populated and crying out for settled industries and cultivation. The chiefs were the only interested parties likely to raise any difficulties, and of these the most formidable had now been providentially removed. Those of secondary importance she proposed should be suitably compensated. A month later she again wrote to Sidney, but with a slight change of programme. By the terms of this revised scheme, Alexander Oge and his Scots were to be handsomely rewarded for their services against Shane, but at the same time, were to be politely told to leave the country.* If they did not fall in harmoniously with this arrangement, then force was to be used to expel them, for on one point she was immovably determined, and that was that the Route and the Glynnys should be planted with English.

At the same time that the Queen was expounding her schemes to Sidney, an alternative proposition was being put forward by Sir Francis Knollys, the Vice-Chamberlain, which savoured

* Elizabeth to Sidney, July, 1567.

strongly of Cusack. This was that the Scots should be given a grant of the O'Neils' territories if they could annex them by force, and if they would themselves evacuate Antrim and leave it free to be planted with English.* A sort of compromise between the two schemes was eventually agreed to, and the task of conducting the preliminary negotiations was entrusted to Captain Piers, the Constable of Carrickfergus, who was always a great favourite with the Queen, having helped her on one thrilling occasion before her accession to escape from the blood-thirsty clutches of her sister Mary. This sturdy old soldier—subsequently much abused by Essex—displayed considerable diplomatic skill over the business, and so worked upon the better feelings of Sorley Boy, who had recently landed at the Glynns, that the Scot agreed to a peace till May, 1568, up to which date he undertook to evacuate north-east Antrim, and to leave himself in the hands of Her Majesty. This, as a matter of fact, was no small concession, for Sorley Boy had only just landed with seven hundred men when Captain Piers started his overtures. By the terms of the agreement, Rathlin Island, off the north-east coast of Antrim, was to be left in Sorley Boy's hands till some more permanent settlement had been agreed upon. Piers, without waiting to consult the Dublin authorities, took upon himself the responsibility of setting his seal upon this arrangement, which was set out in writing and signed by both parties, Sorley Boy's signature being guided by a friendly hand.

In view of future very unpleasant developments, it must be conceded that Sorley Boy faithfully carried out his side of the bargain, so far as he was personally concerned. He withdrew from the mainland to Rathlin Island, but he did not take back his 700 Scots, who probably refused to return in face of the many tempting offers with which they were approached from all sides. There was, in fact, a brisk competition for their services among the various Ulster chiefs. Eventually Tirlough Luineach secured 300, and Rory Oge McQuillin and O'Donnell divided the rest between them.†

It was perhaps owing to the retention of this formidable body of Scots in Ulster that the Queen was filled with certain misgivings as to the *bona fides* of Sorley Boy's assurances.

* Cal. State Papers, July, 1567.

† Cal. State Papers, Jan. 1568,

No sooner was the Scot safely in Rathlin Island than she ordered two frigates and a barque to patrol the coast, to frustrate any inclination he might show to change his mind and pay a visit to the mainland.* This precaution was probably inspired by a report that Sorley Boy's brother Alexander was in Cantyre with 1,200 men, and with sufficient boats to bring them all over to Ireland. The rumour was probably a false one, and, in any case, no such attempt was made. Up to April, 1568, Elizabeth's garrisons remained in peaceable and undisputed occupation of the Route and Glynnns. In the meanwhile the Scots occupied not only the spring but the whole of the summer in fighting one another in the Cantyre district, and, so engrossed did they become with their own domestic dissensions, that it was actually four years from the date of his agreement with Captain Piers before Sorley Boy once more set foot on the mainland of Ulster.

Having thus got rid temporarily of the Scots, thanks to the diplomatic efforts of Captain Piers, for which he was much commended by the Queen, Sir William Fitzwilliam, who had succeeded Sidney as Deputy in the autumn of 1567, now turned his attention to the native Chiefs. His first dealings were naturally with the new O'Neil, Tirlough Luineach, so called from his having been fostered with one of the O'Luiney sept. This chieftain had lost not a moment in having himself invested at Tullahogue with the usual "brutish ceremonies" so strongly denounced by Sidney. Politically he was as yet an unknown quantity, the only outstanding feature of his career so far having been the murder of young Brian O'Neil, which was an act which few of his contemporaries would reckon to his prejudice. He was fifteen years the junior of Shane, belonging, in fact, to a younger generation, for his grandfather had been brother to Shane's father. He was the son of Neil Connelly O'Neil and of the widow of Dermot O'Cleary, who, before her marriage, had been Rose McManus O'Donnell. Little was known of him beyond that he was, by common consent, a far more formidable warrior in the field than his predecessor Shane had been. In fact, Tirlough Luineach for some years past had acted as Shane's military leader.

The new O'Neil proved most amenable. He suavely accepted the Queen's ruling that McMahon, Magennis, Maguire

* Queen to Sidney, Aug. 1567.

and O'Hanlon were to be independent of his overlordship, as well as the further and even more crushing ultimatum that he was to share the O'Neil territories with the much-petted Baron of Dungannon. This most unwelcome clause in the agreement provided that Dungannon was to have the southern half of Tyrone and Tirlough Luineach the northern half, with the mountain of Mullaghcarra acting as a rough boundary between the two divisions. Tirlough Luineach—who was evidently in a generous mood—also agreed to assist the Queen with all his strength against the Scots, should these again attempt a landing on the Antrim coast.

Tirlough Luineach—according to the evidence of his chroniclers, and of such of the English as came in close contact with him—was an easy-going man of amiable disposition and of very modest ambitions. He was accounted a good warrior on occasions, but was too fond of eating and drinking to make any permanent mark as a soldier. Sir Nicholas Bagenal describes him as “a facile and brittle man, without ambitions,” and this description tallies with the character given him by the various Irish Annalists. Terence Donnelly, Dean of Armagh, wrote to Cecil that the new O'Neil was “a savage but timorous man,”* which in modern English may be translated as “uneducated and unenterprising,” for timorous in the sense of cowardly he certainly was not. Although unambitious as a politician, he cannot be accused of undue diffidence in pushing his matrimonial interests; for he first of all proposed for the hand of Lady Bagenal's sister, and, when Sir Nicholas scornfully informed him that he would sooner see his sister-in-law burnt,† he transferred his attentions to Lady Agnes Campbell, whom he eventually—after much solicitation—succeeded in leading to the altar. Never did bridegroom strike a better bargain. This, however, was not till later.

The evacuation by the Scots of the Route and Glynn's for a period of four years gave the Queen all the opportunity she could possibly have desired for carrying out her colonization scheme, but she failed to take advantage of it. The financing of the enterprise was no simple matter; nor was it easy to find settlers of the right class who would venture their all in the way of materials, goods and personal safety in such a hazardous

* Dean of Armagh to Cecil, Oct. 5th, 1567.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 22-36-5.

experiment. The vacated lands remained to a large extent unoccupied between the years 1567 and 1572. In the absence of the Scots, Sir Brian McPhelim O'Neil, the lord of North Clandeboyne, scoured the whole country as far as the Bann for any livestock the McDonnells might have left behind;* and the sept of the McQuillins, who claimed that their title to the Route was older than that of the McDonnells, naturally seized the opportunity to reoccupy the lands from which they had been gradually pushed by the encroachments of the Scots.

In the meanwhile Tirlough Luineach was scarcely keeping up the traditional reputation of the O'Neils for turbulence. His first attempt to assert his dignity had been in 1568, when he had sent a raiding expedition, under Shane's eldest grandson, Con Boy McHenry, into McMahon's country. The main object of this raid was to make it clear to McMahon that Tirlough Luineach's renunciation of his overlordship of Monaghan in favour of the Queen had been merely a polite formality. He failed, however, to create the effect intended, for the invading party was very badly defeated, and Con Boy—who could not have been more than fifteen years old at the time—was killed,† together with 300 of his men. Discouraged by this failure, Tirlough Luineach remained uneventfully quiet for a year and a half in his newly-built Castle of Dunalong, on the east shore of the Foyle, from which sanctuary he dispatched periodical appeals to Lady Agnes Campbell to marry him. His first act of open hostility to the Government was in August, 1569, when he made a successful raid on Newry and carried off 3,000 cattle belonging to Sir Nicholas Bagenal and the Dean of Armagh. He had not forgotten the Marshal's insulting message with regard to his sister-in-law. Having thus to a certain extent wiped out the insult by leaving the Marshal meatless, he completed his triumph by hurrying across to Rathlin Island and there marrying the much-sought-for Lady Agnes, widow of James McDonnell.

Tirlough Luineach spent a fortnight on the island to celebrate this important union between the clans of O'Neil and McDonnell. The Earl of Argyle sent him a taffeta hat set with bugles as a wedding-present, and there was much joyous carousing.‡ The

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 24-38-2.

† Cal. State Papers, May, 1568.

‡ Fitzwilliam to Cecil, Sept. 1569.

alliance between the two families was still further cemented by the marriage at the same time of Tirlough Luineach's eldest son Henry to Lady Agnes's third daughter, the elder two, Catherine and Inceenduv, having already married Shane O'Neil and Hugh O'Donnell. By this skilful tactical move Tirlough Luineach enormously increased his political power. The McDonnells were under tacit agreement with Elizabeth not to interfere with her Plantation schemes by asserting any territorial rights in north-east Antrim, but there was nothing to prevent the wife of the O'Neil from having in her pay as many Scots as she chose to enlist. According to Fitzwilliam, Lady Agnes brought some 3,000 fighting Scots to the O'Neil as her marriage portion, but even this number was not considered enough, and in March of the following year she went over to Cantyre to complete arrangements for a further consignment. Her son James, however, who was now Lord of the Isles, took anything but a favourable view of this last development, which would have had the effect of partially denuding Cantyre of its fighting strength, and his mother was kindly but firmly detained in Scotland till her ambitions had assumed more modest limits.

In the meanwhile Elizabeth's Plantation scheme, though slow in materializing, was by no means dead. It was taken up once more with some enthusiasm by the original promoter, Sir Thomas Smith. After many months of protracted negotiations, this enterprising land-speculator was given a grant, not of the much-discussed Route and Glynns, but of the more accessible districts of Ards and Lough Strangford. This was in the early months of 1572. Smith was naturally of the land-adventurer class, and it is not to be supposed that his principles were higher than those of others of his profession. At the same time, his letters give evidence of good intentions, real or simulated. He wrote a long letter to Sidney, expressing generous hopes for the speedy betterment of social conditions in the country to which he contemplated migrating. His enterprise, he was careful to explain, was not designed "to destroy the Irish race, but to teach them to leave off robbing, stealing and killing one another."* He had already paved the way for his proposed reformation of Ulster society by a courteous letter which he had written to Sir Brian McPhelim. To this truculent chief he volunteered the information that he was coming to

* Sir Thomas Smith to Sidney, Nov. 1572.

live in his part of the world, and expressed the hope that they would prove good friends and neighbours.* Sir Brian, as a matter of fact, had no legitimate jurisdiction over the country which Smith was preparing to Plant. This belonged by hereditary right to Con McNeil Oge, a turbulent and bloodthirsty chief, who, at the moment, was a prisoner in Dublin Castle. In fact it was mainly because of this chief's safe incarceration that his country had been, in the end, selected for Planting in preference to the Antrim lands further north, originally contemplated. Smith's conciliatory letter to Sir Brian was dictated by the following considerations. Sir Brian's own lands proper lay in North Clondeboye on the far side of Carrickfergus Bay. On the imprisonment of Con McNeil Oge, he had at once usurped possession of all that chief's lands in South Clondeboye, as well as of Killultagh (Upper Massareene), of which he now styled himself the Captain. He was, therefore, at the time of Smith's expedition, the rightful lord of North Clondeboye, and the lord by usurpation of South Clondeboye (Castlereagh), which latter district was perilously close to Smith's new grant of the Ards.

Sir Brian, not being able to write, made no reply to Smith's polite overtures, but he took his own measures, and promptly. What those measures were will be seen in due course.

In this connection it may not be amiss to take a glance at a Scotch invasion, in the same part of the world, which had just preceded that of Sir Thomas Smith. Sorley Boy, after nearly four years' absence from Ireland, had landed in Ulster in March, 1571, with 700 men, of whom he left 300 in the Glynns, under the command of his son, Donald Gorn, while the remaining 400, under Alexander McRandall Boy, continued their course down the coast, and ultimately landed in the Ards. The object of this last move is not quite clear. There is certain presumptive evidence that the Scots came at the instigation of Sir Brian, with the idea of intimidating Smith and possibly of deterring him from his contemplated venture. The fact that 300 men were left in the Glynns suggests strongly that the McDonnells were not yet assured that the Plantation scheme was going to be confined to the Ards. As soon, however, as they realized that this was the case, and that the Route and the Glynns were not going to be interfered with, they withdrew

* Sir Thomas Smith to Sir Brian McPhelim, May, 1572

from the Ards and retired to their own exclusive district in the north-east.

It is interesting to note that there was no opposition on the part of the Irish on this occasion, or, indeed, at any other time, to invasions of Scotch Highlanders from across the water. The Irish and the Highlanders were alike Celts of somewhat kindred habits and language. Both the one and the other professed the Roman Catholic religion. The Highlanders amalgamated easily with the Irish natives, and the aristocracy of both races, as we have seen, intermarried freely. Where there is no religious antagonism, the merging of contiguous races of the same colour is usually rapid. The moment, however, that there was a question of an English Plantation an entirely different feeling was noticeable. Here for the first time the religious question intruded on the Ulster problem. The English were Protestants, and as such cut off from association with both Irish and Highland Scotch. It was felt that this common foe must be kept out of the country at all costs, and for this purpose an alliance offensive and defensive was temporarily formed between Sorley Boy and Brian McPhelim. The latter, in a last despairing effort to stave off the English invasion, wrote (or procured to be written) an explanatory letter to Fitzwilliam, in which he gloomily predicted that Antrim and Down would never support men of English descent, being all bog where it was not hazel or holly scrub. Furthermore, he affirmed that Sorley Boy had done, and was doing, all that was needful for the country in the way of agricultural improvement, having in point of fact already introduced more ploughs into that part of the world than had been seen there for the past hundred years.*

Fitzwilliam, as may be supposed, paid little attention to arguments which were clearly interested, and the preliminary stages of the proposed colonization scheme were concluded without further hitch. There was no difficulty whatever as between Smith and Henry Savage, who, as the existing representative of the earliest English settlers in the Ards, was clearly entitled to some voice in the proposed arrangement. Savage, as a matter of fact, welcomed the idea of a more settled and civilised population around him. He was the first to greet young Tom Smith (representing his father) on his arrival at Lough

* Sir Brian McPhelim to Deputy, March, 1571.

Strangford on August 31st, 1572, and accompanied the young settler from the landing-place to Newtown-Ards, which Smith proposed to make his headquarters for the time being. Brian McPhelim was not equally cordial. He, and his band of wild horsemen, hung upon the skirts of the incoming settlers all the way from Lough Strangford to Newtown-Ards, and, after a few days, his attitude became so threatening that Smith thought it best to shift his quarters to Carrickfergus, where there was always the Castle into which the garrison could retire if hard pressed. His withdrawal, as the event proved, was only just in time. He had barely got clear of the district before Sir Brian and the Baron's two sons, Cormac and Art, swept down on the Ards, murdered poor Henry Savage, presumably on account of his friendliness towards Smith, and burned all the surrounding country, including Newtown-Ards, Meville, Bangor and Hollywood.*

Having registered his protest against an English settlement in his own peculiar way, Sir Brian promptly sued for peace, being appreciably influenced in this direction by the approach to the Dufferin, by way of Lecale, of the Marshal and 100 horsemen. The Government treated with proper contempt a petition which was clearly influenced by fear and not by friendliness, but, on the other hand, no drastic steps were taken to punish Sir Brian for his late outrage. Captain Piers was away at the time, and Smith was too busy looking after his settlers and too generally incompetent to attempt active hostilities.

This youthful adventurer had, in fact, so far shown neither tact nor ability. Captain Piers, the Constable, was in England at the time when Smith shifted his quarters from Newtown-Ards to Carrickfergus, and in his absence the newcomer took upon himself the command of the place, and acted generally in a very high-handed and overbearing manner. His first attempt at an administrative act was to forbid the townspeople to trade with the natives.† This ill-advised act was the cause of very general consternation. The townsmen wrote in great distress to Fitzwilliam, complaining that the enforcement of the edict would place them on the high road to ruin, and petitioning his interference. Before, however, any interference was possible, young Smith had added so heavily to the sum of his

* Cal. State Papers, Oct. 1572.

† McKimmin's "History of Carrickfergus."

offences that the first complaint was lost sight of in the mass of later charges. To begin with, he seized upon all the town cattle for the use of his troops, and, when the townspeople very naturally protested that this would reduce them to starvation, he allowed them to redeem such cattle as he did not require by a payment of 4d. per head, on the condition that they threw into the bargain twenty hogsheads of barley and ten hogsheads of malt.* The poor townsmen had no option but to agree, and Smith, having in this way satisfactorily provided both meat and beer for his men, marched off on a prospecting expedition with the entire garrison, leaving the town quite unprotected. This was, of course, Sir Brian's opportunity, and, almost before Smith and the garrison were out of sight, he rode in and pillaged and burned the town.

The endurance no less than the courage of the townsmen was now all but exhausted. Their actual lives, it is true, were not in danger; for on the approach of the Irish they could always retire into the Queen's Castle, which stood on the tongue of land jutting out into the sea, and which was so strongly walled as to be impregnable; but they had no means of protecting their houses and property, whose only defence lay in a mud rampart and ditch. Without a garrison this could by no means be manned, and it therefore seemed waste of labour to renovate their gutted houses. In these deplorable circumstances, the townspeople resolved that the altered conditions in Carrickfergus rendered further life there impossible, and they determined to migrate in a body to the Pale. Just, however, as the caravan was on the point of setting out, a report reached Carrickfergus which was no less exciting than it was welcome. It was said that Sir Thomas Smith's grant had been revoked, or rather that it had been transferred to the Earl of Essex, who was on the point of sailing for Carrickfergus with a strong force of English. The report was in substance true. It had been recognized both in London and Dublin that Smith was quite unfitted for the task he had undertaken. He was without the military capacity to make any impression, physical or moral, on the natives, and, on the other hand, he had effectually succeeded in alienating the sympathy of the English by his high-handed seizure of their property and general assumption of authority.

* McSkimmin's "History of Carrickfergus."

CHAPTER IV

Transfer of Smith's grant to Essex—Rathlin Island included—Arrival of Essex—Hugh Bacon of Dungannon—His early training and education—Essex's dealings with Tirlough Luineach—Con McNeil Boy—Murder of Thomas Smith—Neil McBrian Feartagh—Fitzwilliam's hostility to Essex—He diverts his food supplies—Sir Brian's submission—His treacherous conduct—Indignation of Essex—Sir Brian proclaimed traitor—Mortality among the Carrickfergus garrison—Essex's plans—He recommends the granting of the Glynn to Sorley Boy—Con McNeil escapes from Dublin Castle—Essex's arrangement with Con—Con occupies Carrickfergus—Plight of the townsmen—Sorley Boy to the rescue—Brian Ballough—Elizabeth's fear of the Ulster Scots—Hostility of the Ulster Chiefs to Essex.

WALTER DEVEREUX, EARL OF ESSEX, had for many years past had his eye on the possibilities of land speculation in Ireland, and, being in high favour with the Queen, had little difficulty in prevailing on her to transfer Smith's grant to himself, with certain extensions. Smith himself had by this time realized his failure and general unfitness for the undertaking, and was not sorry to see the main burden of the new settlement placed on other shoulders. His only stipulation was that he should be allowed to remain in the Ards as long as he wished, which was agreed.

Essex's scheme was in large part financed by the Queen, who lent him £10,000 for the purpose on the security of his estates in Essex and Bucks. It was a far more ambitious effort than Smith's, for Essex was armed with an elastic commission as Governor of Ulster, and with a grant which practically included the whole of modern Antrim and Down, with the exception of 1,000 acres round Carrickfergus. The fishings on the Bann and on Lough Neagh were also granted him, as well as the Island of Rathlin.

It is difficult to justify Elizabeth's inclusion of Rathlin Island in this grant of hers to Essex. In the original agreement, ratified on behalf of the Government by Captain Piers, Rathlin Island—which had very little agricultural value—had been definitely assigned to Sorley Boy. The Scot had more than

carried out his side of the contract, for, whereas he had only bound himself to evacuate the mainland for a few months so as to give the colonization scheme a fair chance of success, he had in actual practice remained absent for no less than four years. Under these circumstances the inclusion of the island in the grant had all the appearance of a flagrant breach of faith, and it was to provide a justification for one of the most horrid tragedies in the history of Ulster.

Essex arrived early in September, 1573, with a convoy the like of which Ulster had never yet seen. He brought with him 600 foot, 200 horse, 100 labourers and 400 adventurers, and was accompanied by Lord Rich (his son-in-law), Lord Darcy, Sir Henry Knollys, and three of Lord Norris's six sons.* The appearance of this reassuring array stayed the stampede from Carrickfergus, but raised food difficulties, which for a time threatened to checkmate the entire scheme; for the Director for Supplies, one Dominick Chester, proved two months late in his delivery, pleading the usual excuse of contrary winds, but according to popular rumour having been prompted to the delay by the malignity of Fitzwilliam, the Lord Deputy.

Elizabeth was always quick to adapt chance circumstances to the peculiar needs of the moment, and by her express desire Hugh O'Neil, the young Baron of Dungannon, was now attached to the staff of the new Governor, her idea in this being to continue the association of the future Earl of Tyrone with English noblemen of high position and civilizing influence. Elizabeth attached immense importance to the maintenance of an atmosphere of English culture round this wild Celtic shoot. Young Hugh had been assiduously reared among English surroundings; first at Sir Henry Sidney's beautiful home at Penshurst, and later on with the Earl of Leicester. The exact date on which he was taken over to England is uncertain, but it was unquestionably very early in his career, for Sidney says that he had him in his charge "from a little boy, though very poor of goods and full feebly friended."† Dungannon himself corroborates this in a letter to Elizabeth, in which he refers to himself at the time of his father's death in 1558 as "an infant of tender age and in your Highness's ward."‡ These two statements

* McSkimmin's "History of Carrickfergus."

† Sidney to Walsingham, March 1st, 1583.

‡ Carew MSS.

would seem to place Hugh's age in 1558 at not more than ten, and though his birth is commonly reckoned to have been in 1540, he must in reality have been born quite eight years later.

Brian had been several years older than Hugh, and it had been with a view to comparing the relative merits of the two brothers that Elizabeth had sent for Brian in 1562—a summons which, as it turned out, proved his death-warrant. With the death of the elder brother, Elizabeth's educational efforts were more than ever concentrated on the second son. He was sent to Oxford, and provided with a suitable equipage, with which he was used to flaunt it in the streets of London, all at the Queen's expense. At the time of Shane's death, in 1567, Hugh's age—according to this reckoning—would have been nineteen, an age which fits in harmoniously with all the known facts. He had little following in Ireland. His English education, English habits, English speech and English patronage procured him but slight favour in his own country, and Tirlough Luineach was elected as the O'Neil with the unanimous voice of Tyrone. Then, for a time, Hugh made his residence with Sir Nicholas Bagenal at Newry, and in fact remained under the wing of the old Marshal till the date of Essex's arrival, when, in conformity with the Queen's wishes, he was transferred to the Governor's staff.

The two Chiefs whose co-operation was most essential to the success of Essex's scheme were, first of all, Tirlough Luineach, as the most prominent representative of the old feudal system in Ulster, and secondly, Sir Brian McPhelim, the head of the Clandeboyne O'Neils, who, either by virtue of inheritance or piracy, was in possession of most of the lands over which Essex's grant extended. Tirlough Luineach—though very strong since his marriage—had, by the advice of his wife, so far steered clear of serious complications with the Government, though always in a hostile camp to the Government protégé, the Baron of Dungannon. Essex wrote him a friendly and conciliatory letter, in which he laid special emphasis on the fact that his main object in coming to Ulster was to expel the Scots, and that this was a worthy enterprise in which he and Tirlough Luineach were equally interested, and in which they might well and advantageously co-operate.* The tenour of this letter was, in fact, inspired by the Queen herself, who had lately taken into her head—quite erroneously—the idea that the disloyalty of the

* Essex to Tirlough Luineach, Sept. 18th, 1573.

Irish was in a large part due to her failure to defend them from the encroachments of the Scots.* Whether this idea was put into her head by Piers or by Fenton is not on record, but it is quite clear that it took a strong hold on her imagination, more especially as it fell smoothly in line with her own anti-Scotch prejudices.

While awaiting a reply from Tirlough Luineach, Essex made some special efforts towards coming to an understanding with his truculent neighbour, Sir Brian McPhelim. This Brian was a younger brother of Hugh McPhelim, at the time a prisoner in Dublin Castle, and they were both the sons of old Phelim Baeagh, who was directly descended from the great Hugh Boy O'Neil, Lord of Clandeboyce. The proper inheritance of Phelim Baeagh's sons was North Clandeboyce, *i.e.*, the modern Baronies of Upper and Lower Antrim, while South Clandeboyce and Killutagh had descended to Con McNeil Oge, who was also a scion of the line of Hugh Boy O'Neil. Con, however, as has already been explained, was in Dublin Castle at the time, and Sir Brian, taking advantage of his absence, had usurped authority over the whole district surrounding Carrickfergus Bay. The claims of both Brian McPhelim and of Con McNeil Oge to their respective lands had been officially recognized and ratified by Croft, so that, from the first, it was evident that Essex's charter was here on very delicate ground. Essex's claim was that Brian had forfeited his rights by the murder of Savage, the burning of Ards, and the previous murder during a friendly parley of a certain Mr. Moore. He found fresh ground for assailing Brian's title in an incident which occurred shortly after his landing. This was the murder of young Tom Smith. A good deal of uncertainty surrounds the actual deed and its causes. Essex, in a letter to the Privy Council, says that Smith was murdered by some Irish servants of his household whom he much trusted.† Cox, on the other hand, in his "*Hibernia Anglicana*" accuses Neil McBrian Feartagh of the deed. This last-named chief was another of the many descendants of Hugh Boy O'Neil, and one who contended that his hereditary claims to South Clandeboyce were stronger than those of Con McNeil Oge. Subsequent events suggest that Cox's version of the affair is wrong, for Neil McBrian Feartagh was afterwards received into strong

* Essex to Burleigh, July 20th, 1573.

† Essex to Privy Council, Oct. 1573.

Government favour, was established in the lordship of South Clandeboy after the death of Con McNeil Oge, and throughout Tyrone's rebellion proved the most loyal of all the Irish chiefs in Down or Antrim. Essex, at any rate, managed to trace the hand of Sir Brian in the affair, a circumstance in which he found an added justification for his invasion of Brian's territorial rights. It is quite evident to the modern student of the situation that the tale of Brian's crimes—real or imaginary—was mainly designed to strengthen Essex's hand in arriving at some sort of a compromise, which he was wise enough to recognize was better than a fight. The fighting strength of the English in north-east Ulster had, indeed, been seriously prejudiced by the extraordinary conduct of the Deputy, Sir William Fitzwilliam, who, for reasons which will presently be understood, viewed Essex's commission as Governor of Ulster with the greatest disfavour. He had already made an underhand attempt to starve him out by giving the victuallers a hint that their supplies, destined for the garrisons in Antrim, Down and Armagh, would be more welcome elsewhere; and now, on the pretext of a shortage of food for which he was himself responsible, he endeavoured to make Essex's position in the north untenable by withdrawing the garrisons from Newry and Armagh. The effect of this spiteful act was—as intended—to leave Essex so completely isolated that he was forced by the weakness of his position to angle for a friendly compromise which at heart he was far from desiring. Brian was formally invited to meet the Governor for a pacific conference at Kells, and Brian replied that a meeting with his Lordship would be the highest honour he could desire. Accordingly, in April, 1574, Essex, accompanied by young John Norris, set out for the trysting-place. Nothing could have been humbler or more flattering than the demeanour of the Irish Chief. He admitted his past shortcomings, made humble submission, acknowledged Essex's suzerainty, and formally renounced all title to the lands of North Clandeboy.* A letter embodying this satisfactory conclusion was then drafted, signed by Brian (with some assistance), and forwarded to Elizabeth, accompanied by a special recommendation from Essex that the penitent Chief should be granted a full pardon for all his past errors.

* Brian McPhelim to Queen, May, 1574. See also Essex to Queen, May, 1574.

Essex was delighted with the success of his diplomatic venture, which made it quite clear to him that Sir Thomas Smith and others had grievously bungled the whole affair, and that only proper tact was required in order to establish friendly relations all round. Sir Peter Carew, who had been sent up to Essex to act as his Lieutenant and Counsellor, warned him against undue optimism; but the new Governor, who had yet to buy his experience of the country, was not to be discouraged, and in his new sense of security relaxed his guard upon the garrison cattle. This was, of course, exactly what Sir Brian had been waiting for, and he at once swooped down and carried off an entire herd. Essex's fury knew no bounds. The disillusion was complete, and intensely bitter to a man bred in the school of English chivalry. Never again, he swore in his wrath, would he put faith in such a perfidious people. It would appear that, after his first outburst, Essex soon settled down to a calmer frame of mind. His first feeling had been one of rage; his second was one of self-congratulation that he had made his discovery of the native character before it was too late; "for now," he argued, "I have no occasion to trust the Irish, whereby I might have been more abused than by open force. . . . My first actions showed nothing but leniency, plainness and an equal care of both nations; my next shall show more severity of justice abroad, and less trust at home."*

It is more than probable that some of Essex's subsequent acts may be explained, though they can never be excused, by this early initiation of his into the ways of the country; and indeed it is clear, from the above-quoted fragment, that he was bracing himself to the adoption of a far more rigorous policy than he had contemplated on his first arrival. In the search for a guiding hand from among those who had experience of the country, he wrote the painful story of his troubles to the Dublin Privy Council. "The Irish cannot judge of favour," he peevishly protested in commenting on the catastrophe that had crowned his conciliatory efforts. From what we know of the humour of the Privy Council at the time it is not unreasonable to assume that the news of Essex's discomfiture did not cause them unmixed sorrow. In any case, we may be sure that the Lord Deputy chuckled. However, fitting sympathy was expressed, Brian was proclaimed a traitor, and a price of £200

* Bagwell, Vol. II., p. 295.

was placed on his head.* Armed with this proclamation, Essex set out to get even with the man who had so grievously fooled him. Brian himself wisely kept out of the way, but Essex had the satisfaction of killing 100 of his people and recovering 400 of his cattle. Brian retorted by forbidding the natives to bring any supplies into Carrickfergus. Fitzwilliam, as we know, had already given the victuallers a hint that if they neglected the Ulster garrisons their shortcomings would not be viewed unfavourably. With hostile influences at work from nominal friends no less than from proclaimed foes, it is not surprising that the shortage of food, which had prevailed in a greater or less degree ever since the arrival of Essex's convoy, soon became very acute indeed. Shortage inevitably necessitates the use of improper food, which in its turn generates disease. By the time spring was reached the soldiers were dying at the rate of from fifteen to twenty a day.† Under the strain of hunger and sickness they became mutinous and refused active service. Many of the mounted men deliberately lamed their horses so as to avoid being called out.

Such a combination of adverse conditions thoroughly disgusted Essex with his headquarters. He complained that the Castle had very few rooms, and that most of these were unroofed by fires which had taken place at one time or another. The town was very unsanitary and had no common harbour for ships, and, he added, "considering that near unto Belfast is a place meet for a corporate town armed with all commodities and a principal haven, wood and good ground, and a place of great importance for service : I think it convenient that a fortification be made there at the spring." He further suggested the building of bridges over the rivers Lagan and Bann, and that Ligh the engineer should be sent over to construct these. With regard to his four hundred adventurers, his scheme provided that these should build Castles all the way along the coast from Carrickfergus to the Bann, the choice of situation to be decided by lot, and the Castles to be near one another for mutual protection, with the lands pertaining to the Castles running inland. He added the further suggestion that from this coast scheme the Glynnys (Carey) should be excluded, and should be settled by

* Essex to Privy Council, May, 1574.

† Essex to Burleigh, May 13th, 1574.

Royal grant on Sorley Boy, who claimed—with some show of justification—to trace back his title to the marriage in 1399 of his ancestor, John Mor McDonald, to Margery Bissett, the then owner of the lands.* This proposed arrangement, equitable though it may have been, was hardly in accordance with the principle of expelling all the Scots, to which Essex had bound himself in his agreement with Tirlough Luineach. However, as matters turned out, it was the only part of the proposed scheme which took effect, though by no means with the sanction or approval of the Queen. Essex's only other request was that he might have the custody of Hugh McPhelim (Sir Brian's elder brother) and of Con McNeil Oge, both of whom were prisoners at the time in Dublin Castle. This last was equivalent to a request for money, or for money's worth, for imprisoned chiefs were always exchangeable for cash, and were indeed seldom imprisoned except for the purpose of such exchange. Fitzwilliam could hardly, with decency, refuse the transfer, for both the chiefs very clearly belonged to Essex's district, but he took good care to arrange—no doubt for a consideration—for Con McNeil Oge's escape before the transfer could be completed. Hugh McPhelim, however, passed safely into the custody of the Ulster Governor. Con's escape from Dublin Castle was, beyond all question, part of Fitzwilliam's general plan for embarrassing Essex and defeating his Plantation schemes, and no doubt Essex read it as such. He was shrewd enough, however, to turn the new situation as far as possible to his own advantage in the following way.

The sons of Phelim Bacagh had been assigned the lands of North Clandeboye by Croft in 1555, at the time when Hugh McNeil Oge (Con's elder brother) had been killed by the Scots, Con at the same time being assigned South Clandeboye and Killultagh. No sooner, however, had Con disappeared within the walls of Dublin Castle than Sir Brian coolly annexed the whole of his lands, and held them by the primitive argument of the sword. In the outraged and dispossessed Con McNeil Oge, then, Essex saw a convenient instrument of destruction ready to his hand. No sooner was the foot of the newly-released chief once more on his native heath than Essex came forward with a proposal to reinstate him in his old possessions, and to support his occupation with the English troops, if Con

* Hill's "McDonnells of Antrim."

would make his title good by killing Brian. Nothing could have suited Con better, and he closed with the offer without stopping to bargain. The opportunity for carrying out his side of the agreement soon presented itself, for, within a week, he reported to Essex that he had reliable information to the effect that Brian was meditating a raid on Carrickfergus. Nothing, in point of fact, was more probable, for Essex had long since wearied of the short supplies and discomforts of Carrickfergus, and had transferred himself and the bulk of his troops to more comfortable quarters at Newry, where ample accommodation had been left vacant by Fitzwilliam's withdrawal of the old garrison. The Carrickfergus townsmen, therefore, were very nearly as defenceless as when Smith had left them without a garrison two years before. Con's suggestion was that he should introduce 200 of his men within the town precincts, and that, when Brian incautiously rode in, under the delusion that he had only a few unarmed burghers to deal with, Con and his 200 men should rise up and fall upon him.

The townsmen were delighted with the idea, for the thought of Brian's head grinning on the Castle gate was inexpressibly sweet to them. When the moment arrived, Con and his men were duly introduced and distributed about in the various scattered houses. The plan, as made out, was an admirable one, the only flaw in it being that Brian did not come, and in all probability had never even thought of coming. Con, however, had by his well-considered ruse, gained admission to the town, and, having done so, had no intention of quitting before he had made the most of such good things as were to be got out of the situation. The unfortunate townsmen were gradually eaten bare. Seeing no hope of ever getting rid of their visitor, they managed one dark night to let a horseman secretly out of the town, who galloped to Sorley Boy, at Glenarm, with the offer of £20 in wine, silk and saffron, if he would come and turn the intruder out. Sorley Boy did not need asking twice, and the very next day rode in to the rescue, but Con had somehow got the news of his approach, and he and his 200 men made off in haste before the Scots arrived on the scene.*

The next experience of the unfortunate townsmen was

* McSkimmin's "History of Carrickfergus."

less happy, and dearly they must have longed for the good Captain Piers and his protective arm to be once more among them. The calamity which overtook them was this: Brian Ballough, one of the minor brigand-chiefs of the district, came down and carried off an entire herd of cattle which the townsmen had recently bargained for and bought. As this loss meant the renewal of the very serious privations which they had recently undergone, the townsmen sent a deputation to Brian, offering him their only marketable commodities, to wit, wine, silk and saffron, as a ransom for their cattle. Brian Ballough agreed to the exchange, and the goods were dispatched, but, in the plaintive language of the unfortunate townsmen, "the said traitor drank the same wine, and received the same saffron and silk, and restored not one of the cattle back again, but cruelly handled the poor men who went with the same to him."*

Walter, Earl of Essex, though in high favour with the Queen, proved himself little better fitted to deal with the native chiefs than had his predecessor. He was rash, impetuous and high-handed, and he was guilty of the fatal error of arguing that the treacherous practices of those with whom he was dealing justified him in having recourse to the same methods. His original Plantation scheme had foundered early in the day, owing to the gradual disillusionment of the unfortunate adventurers. These found, as many had found before them, and as many more were destined to find in later days, that the state of affairs in Ireland was very different from what they had been given to understand before they sailed. Instead of a friendly population welcoming an influx of capital to their country, they found the natives suspicious and furtively hostile. The recent murders of Henry Savage and of young Tom Smith were not calculated to increase their sense of security, and by every English-bound ship that touched at Carriekfergus some of the disappointed adventurers managed to slip away from the perilous country to which they had been inveigled. Others shipped down to the Pale. Already the doom of the proposed settlement was sealed. If only the Queen had listened to the advice of Essex, and of Sussex before him, and had made friends with the Scots, and officially granted to Sorley Boy the peaceable possession of the Glynnns, all might

* Carew MSS., 1578, 114

have been well. The new adventurers would then have had the advantage of a powerful ally in their very midst, who would have been of inestimable service to them during the construction of their Castles. So obsessed, however, was Elizabeth with her insensate hatred and jealousy of everything pertaining to Mary Queen of Scots, that she was blind both to her own interests and to those of her unfortunate subjects whom she had persuaded to embark on the Irish venture. Her natural prejudices were strengthened by the advice of Captain Piers, at that time over in England. Piers was interviewed by the Queen, and gave it as his opinion that there was a conspiracy between Tirlough Luineach's wife, O'Donnell's wife, and Sorley Boy, to convert Ulster into a Scotch province. This view was shared by Sir Nicholas Maltby, another veteran seasoned in Irish wars, for we find him writing to Leicester as late as 1580 to the effect that Lady Agnes had it in her mind "to make a second Scotland of Ulster."* A certain amount of colour was lent to these stories by the alarming number of Highlanders in the province at the time. They practically represented the entire fighting strength of Ulster, and each chief's power was mainly gauged by the number of these hardy warriors whom he could afford to keep in his train. Tirlough Luineach's wife, Lady Agnes, was now said to have 4,000 in her service—a figure which may safely be halved. Her daughter, Inceenduv, now the wife of O'Donnell, had disquieting numbers in her own pay, and facilities for adding to these at will. The above were chiefly Campbells and McLeans, and they therefore in no way diminished the reserves of the McDonnells in Cantyre, on whom Sorley Boy could draw at will. All the potentialities of the situation were pointed out to the Queen, who decided—perhaps not unnaturally, but most unfortunately as it turned out—not to sanction the grant of the Glynnns to Sorley Boy. By this short-sighted ultimatum the old McDonnell was converted from a potential ally into a bitter and implacable enemy, and the death-warrant of the proposed Plantation scheme was signed and sealed.

Essex, greatly disappointed at the failure of his recommendation, complained with perfect justice that "all Ulster was now confederate against him, and there was a common voice against

* Sir N. Maltby to Leicester, Aug. 17th, 1580.

the English Plantation.”* The Chiefs, in justification of their unfriendly attitude, gave out that the enterprise was not for the Queen’s honour, but for the private profit of Essex himself (which was doubtless true), and that they were therefore justified in opposing it by all means. Essex was not even the Queen’s Deputy, they argued, but a private speculator bent on dispossessing them for his own ends.

* Essex to Burleigh, July 20th, 1573.

CHAPTER V

Sidney returns to Ireland—His extraordinary qualities—Essex retires to Newry—Dismay of Sir Nicholas Bagenal—He appeals to the Privy Council—Essex moves to Drogheda—He applies for grants of Farney and Magee Island—He builds a bridge over the Blackwater—Essex's meeting with Brian McPhelim—Arrest and execution of Sir Brian and Rory Oge McQuillin—Readjustment of the Clandeboyes—Shane McBrian and Neil McHugh—Con McNeil Oge—Essex abandons Antrim—He summons Tirlough Luineach to Dundalk—Tirlough Luineach sends Lady Agnes—Her good qualities—Essex invades Tyrone—His alliance with Hugh McManus—Con McCalvagh's refusal—Essex arrests him—Essex invades Coleraine—Is defeated by Sorley Boy and returns to Newry—Essex's failure—His death—Suspicion of poison—Rathlin Island massacre—Sorley Boy attacks Carrickfergus—His victory—Carrickfergus appeals to Sidney—He visits the Glynns and restores Rathlin Island to Sorley Boy—Description of Carrickfergus.

IN September, 1575, Sir Henry Sidney replaced Fitzwilliam as Deputy. "He found Ireland one scene of warfare and intestine commotion—he established peace, friendship and charity between the Kinnell-Connell and the Kinnell-Eoghan,* and throughout every part of Ulster." Such was the tribute paid to Sidney by the Four Masters on the occasion of this, his third appearance in Ireland as Deputy, and the tribute was not altogether unmerited. Sir William Fitzwilliam had filled the gap during his absence, and that unscrupulous politician and Essex, between them, had played havoc with the peace of Ireland. All parties agreed that Sidney, and Sidney alone, was the man who could set things straight again. The unanimity of opinion on this point is most remarkable, and bears testimony to the extraordinary qualities of this great man. Weston, the Chancellor, in a treatise on the general situation in Ireland at the time of Essex's ill-fated Plantation scheme, names Sidney as the only official of the day that the people feared or respected. Fenton, the permanent Secretary, in his correspondence with the London Ministry, went even further in his commendation. "Sir Henry Sidney," he

* Eoghan and Connell were the twin sons of Neil Nayg Yarragh, Hence we get Tyr-Eoghan (Tyrone) and Tyr-Connell. Eoghan, being the first-born, was styled O'Neil.

said, "is mighty and popular with all sorts in all parts of Ireland. He is revered as the patron that would deliver the country."* From the military section of the administration we get a continuation of the eulogy. "Throughout all the land," Captain Piers writes to Walsingham, "Sir Henry Sidney is the man most desired, and that for peace and war generally is deemed the best."† The Queen disliked Sidney, but she was shrewd enough to see the necessity for subordinating her personal feelings to the needs of the situation. Sidney, for the third time, was sent back to Ireland to repair the faults of others, but too late to prevent the mischief which had already been done. The country was indeed in a very lamentable state. Sidney was the last man to make any reflections on the conduct of his predecessor, but he was not so reticent on the subject of Essex and his doings in the North. In a despairing complaint to Walsingham, he bewails the fact that "the violent and intempestuous proceedings of the Earl of Essex" had overthrown all the good feeling he had established in Ulster during his former tenure of office. Nor was this an overstatement of the case. Essex had failed to make a single friend in Ulster. His biographers represent him as a noble but unfortunate man, and it may well be that—judged by the standard of the day—he was no worse than others. His failure in Ulster was due, to a great extent, to Fitzwilliam's systematic hostility to a scheme which threatened to interfere with his own illicit gains, and it was aggravated by ignorance of the country and of the ways of its people. He succeeded in arousing the antagonism of almost every chief in Ulster Tirlough Luineach, O'Cahan, Brian McPhelim, and the newly-escaped Con McNeil Oge, Sorley Boy, the other branches of the McDonnells, and even the usually friendly Maguire, were frankly and undisguisably hostile. O'Donnell, being in no way personally affected, looked on from his inaccessible mountains with contemptuous indifference. Only Sir Hugh O'Reilly was openly friendly, and his friendship for the Ulster Governor "was much disliked by his people," and was not of material value to Essex, as his country was outside the scope of the Plantation scheme.

Essex himself, as we have seen, sickened of Carrickfergus

* Fenton to Walsingham, Nov. 1581.

† Capt. Piers to Walsingham, April 11th, 1583.

and its discomforts at a very early date, and in July of 1574 he left young John Norris in charge of the Belfast and Carrickfergus garrisons, and quartered himself on Sir Nicholas Bagenal at Leicester House, Newry. This invasion was by no means to the taste of the old Marshal, whose official salary of £300 a year did not permit of protracted entertainments, and in October he complained very gloomily to the Privy Council that the Governor had now been at his charge for three full months, and showed no signs of shifting his quarters.* The Privy Council replied, in effect, that God helped those who helped themselves, and the Marshal, taking the hint, managed in some way to get rid of his pertinacious guest, who thereupon shifted his quarters to Drogheda, where he spent much of his time and a great deal of money on improving the place.†

It is not to be supposed that Essex had come to Ireland without some idea of personal land-acquisition at the back of his mind. The settlement of the country with law-abiding subjects, though presenting a sufficiently pleasing prospect to the idealist, was not the primary object for which Essex had abandoned all his English interests and comforts. He was after land, and the profits derivable from land. It was some little time before his choice of localities was made. Curiously enough, the present prosperous counties of Antrim, Down and Armagh were reckoned of little agricultural value in the sixteenth century, and Essex's selection finally fell upon the Barony of Farney,‡ in the south-eastern corner of County Monaghan, and upon the tongue of land on the east coast of Antrim known as Magee Island. Farney lay some ten miles only to the west of Newry, and, during the time that Essex was quartered on the Marshal, he spent much of his time in riding backwards and forwards between Newry and his prospective property, through the woods of the intervening Fews. Through these woods, we are told that, in order to facilitate his coming and going, he caused an avenue to be cut capable of accommodating ten horsemen abreast.§

Though personal gain was naturally Essex's primary object,

* Bagenal to Privy Council, Oct. 11th, 1574. Essex to Privy Council, Oct. 17th, 1574.

† Shirley's "History of Farney."

‡ Shirley's "History of Monaghan."

§ Four Masters.

he cannot be fairly accused of wholly neglecting the national interests. Two acts must always stand to his credit. One was the selection of Belfast as the site of a new fort, and the other was the building of a bridge over the Blackwater, and the permanent establishment of a fort to guard the main passage into central and western Ulster. The first bridge, as built by Essex, was a pontoon bridge with a stone buttress at each end, and a strong fort on the south-east side. It was finished in July, 1575, and was then garrisoned and left in charge of Captain John Cornwall. The strategic importance of this place was very great, and in Tyrone's subsequent rebellion it was the one spot for the possession of which both sides ceaselessly intrigued.

On the other side of the balance sheet stands one very bad act, which Essex's most ardent apologists have failed satisfactorily to explain away. The act in question was the seizure and execution of Brian McPhelim and Rory Oge McQuillin, the two native chiefs who at the moment divided up between them the whole of Antrim, with the exception of the coast district held by the Scotch McDonnells. The exact facts surrounding this incident must always remain a matter of doubt, owing to the disconcerting way in which the several accounts vary. In the "Annals of Queen Elizabeth" (Camden) it is stated that Brian was captured in an engagement in which 200 of his men were killed. The Four Masters, on the other hand, give the following very different story. Brian and his wife were invited to meet Essex at Massareene under a safe conduct. The invitation was accepted, and, after three days and nights of pleasant feasting, 200 of his followers were killed, and Brian and his wife were treacherously seized and sent to Dublin, where they were cut in four pieces. The Records of Carrickfergus, again, say that Brian McPhelim and his half-brother, Rory McQuillin, were arrested at Belfast and executed at Carrickfergus. The main points of difference between the Irish and English versions are that all the former insist that Brian and his wife were executed in Dublin, while the English records place the execution at Carrickfergus, and substitute Rory Oge McQuillin for Brian's wife. Sir Brian's wife was unquestionably arrested at the same time as the others, for we get this clearly in Essex's letter to Sidney of November 17th, but there is no word of her execution. The probability

is that the English version is the correct one, for, had Brian been executed in Dublin, the responsibility for the act would clearly have rested on Sidney, whereas we find Essex at great pains to justify himself in the matter. Apart from this error, and apart from the optimistic estimate of the feast's duration, the Four Masters' account seems to be near enough to the truth. Both sides came to the meeting-place with considerable forces and in evident distrust of one another. Essex had with him his Belfast garrison under John Norris, Nicholas Maltby, the Governor of Lecale, with as many of his men as he could spare, and the Baron of Dungannon in command of some of the Marshal's men. The latter's presence with Essex was anything but a happy augury of peace, for he had just divorced Sir Brian's daughter in order to marry Joan O'Donnell. Whether Con McNeil Oge accompanied Essex or not we do not know, but, if such was the case, much that subsequently happened can be explained, for he and Sir Brian were enemies to the death.

Brian on his side had, at any rate, not less than 200 men with him, for both sides agree as to the number of his casualties. Whether there was any feasting or not is doubtful, but the initial proceedings were most certainly friendly on the surface, for Essex justifies his action, in giving the signal to attack, by the claim that he had discovered a plot of Brian's to murder Maltby in the same way that, on a previous occasion, he had murdered a certain Mr. Moore during a friendly parley, and that in taking the initiative he was merely forestalling the other side. Such purely *ex parte* statements are not easy to substantiate, and in Irish minds, at any rate, Essex's name will for ever be associated with an act of base treachery. In the purely historical mind, a reasonable suspicion of the Governor's *bona fides* is not lessened by the reflection that the two chiefs executed were at the moment the native lords ruling over the lands he was proposing to colonize.*

Brian McPhelim and Rory Oge McQuillin were executed in

* McQuillin's country was in the present Barony of Kileonway. Originally the Route district lying to the north of Kileonway had all been McQuillin's property, but the McDonnells had gradually pushed the original owners south as they themselves became stronger. The actual boundaries dividing the two countries were never of a permanent character, but fluctuated continually in sympathy with the respective strength at the moment of the McDonnells and the McQuillins.

June, 1575. Sir Brian left a son known as Shane McBrian, and a nephew known as Neil McHugh, and these two at once started contending for the dead man's lands in North Clandeboye—a contest which they kept up without intermission, and with ebb and flow results, for over twenty years. In South Clandeboye, and in the vaguely-bounded districts that surrounded it, Sir Brian's death left the way clear for the return of Con McNeil Oge to the home of his ancestors. Even here, however, his reinstatement was not effected without the appearance on the scene of a rival claimant in the shape of Brian Feartagh, or rather of his more ambitious and energetic son, Neil McBrian Feartagh. Con, however, was the stronger both in native following and in Government support, and Neil McBrian had to wait another fifteen years before his opportunity came. When it did come, his triumph was complete, for he managed to capture Con (at that time an outlaw), hand him over to the Government and triumphantly step into his place.

The three new landlords of the Clandeboyes, Shane McBrian, Neil McHugh and Con McNeil Oge, though they were very clear gainers by the death of Sir Brian, were by no means at ease in their newly-acquired possessions, for the reflection not unnaturally came to them that they, in their turn, might be sacrificed as their predecessor had been, in order to clear the way for Essex's Plantation scheme. Out of this reflection, and out of the fears that it gave rise to, grew a very deadly hatred of the Earl of Essex. Whether Essex realized the full intensity of this feeling is not clear, but he could hardly have failed to grasp the one point which most closely affected him personally, which was that, in place of the two local chiefs whom he had done to death, there had risen up, hydra-like, three others equally crafty, equally irreconcilable, and equally determined to frustrate his schemes by any means fair or foul. Nor did the clouds on the horizon end there, for he was now beginning to understand that, even should he succeed in getting rid of the three new land-chiefs, others with equally strong credentials would at once rise up in their place, and carry on the war against the introduction of English settlers. Essex began to weary of his undertaking. He recognized by now that he was too well hated to carry it through by popular agreement, and too weak to force it through with the sword. His

interest in the larger undertaking, too, seems to have waned in exact ratio to the successful progress of his private property schemes. He had served himself better than he had served his Queen; and, content with this conclusion, he definitely abandoned all idea of introducing English blood, and determined to utilize the unexpired portion of his two years' grant in pushing his interests in the wider fields of western Ulster.

His first step in this new direction was to invite Tirlough Luineach to come into Newry and parley, but that cautious chieftain—with Brian McPhelim's recent fate before his eyes—declined the honour, and prudently sent his wife instead. Lady Agnes, a highly cultured lady, who could speak with equal fluency in Gaelic, English or French, made a marked impression on Essex,* who described her as "a wise and civil [civilized] woman, and a great instrument for peace." Bagenal, who was present at the interview, was no less struck, and wrote her down "a very nobell wyse woman." The main condition which Essex tried to impose on this "nobell wyse woman" was that Tirlough Luineach should reduce the number of his mercenary Scots to 300, and that these must be Campbells or McLeans, and in no case McDonnells. Lady Agnes, without giving any definite undertaking on the part of her lord, said she would do her best, and so departed, Tirlough Luineach being given ten days in which to make his decision. It would be interesting to know exactly what passed between husband and wife in the privacy of Dunalong Castle, and whether Lady Agnes was really the "well-wisher for peace" that she appeared to be. If so, her influence was not equal to her intentions, for Tirlough Luineach stoutly declined to yield to Essex's terms, pointing out, with some show of reason, that his compliance would lay him open to attack and ruin at the hands of O'Donnell and other hostile neighbours. Such excuses had no interest whatever for Essex, who—on the pretext that Tirlough Luineach had defied the Queen's mandate—now set out on one of the customary punitive expeditions into Tyrone. He had the satisfaction of crossing the Blackwater by his own new bridge, by this time sufficiently completed to allow of the passage of his troops, and from that point to Clogher he conformed with tradition, and at the same time registered his displeasure at Tirlough Luineach's obstinacy,

* Hill's "McDonnells of Antrim."

by destroying all the corn-stacks he could find. At Clogher he called a halt, and from there made a successful raid south into Fermanagh, and carried off 400 of Maguire's cattle, with which welcome provision for his troops he went on to Omagh, where he encamped. Here Tirlough Luineach put in a sudden appearance with a force of 800 men and attacked the camp, but the attack failed, and Tirlough Luineach himself only narrowly escaped capture by leaving behind his horse and mantle, and plunging into the dense oak woods with which Omagh was then surrounded.* From Omagh the army continued its march, without further incident, down the left bank of the Mourne as far as Lifford. Here the O'Donnell appeared on the scene with 200 horse and 300 gallowglasses, but his intentions were not hostile, for he was on anything but friendly terms at the moment with Tirlough Luineach, and saw in the advent of the Government force possibilities for pushing his own parochial fortunes. Con McCalvagh, too, came out of Lifford Castle, of which he had resumed occupation after Shane's death, and the three conferred together, while Essex's force was revictualling from two ships which had been sent round from Carrickfergus to the Foyle, and which now lay half-way between Derry and Lifford. Essex suggested to the two O'Donnells that they should join him against Tirlough Luineach, holding out the usual inducements in the way of material advantages to be gained.

In Donegal, at the time of Essex's visit, the struggle for the ascendancy between the house of Hugh McManus and the house of Calvagh was still in full vigour, and indeed was destined to outlive the century. In this struggle Con had the influence and effective support of his father-in-law, Tirlough Luineach, between whom and himself there was a lasting and sincere affection. When, therefore, Essex suggested to Hugh that he should join him against Tirlough Luineach, he was putting forward a proposition which there was no need to make twice. Hugh embraced the offer with avidity. With Con, however, it was quite another matter. He was asked not only to fight against his father-in-law, but against the man who had been, and still was, his consistent supporter in his claims to the lands of Donegal. The suggestion was a preposterous one, and he very stoutly refused to have anything to do with it.

* Waterhouse to Burleigh, June, 1575.

Essex could hardly have expected any other reply, but he expressed great indignation, had the unfortunate Con at once arrested, and sent him to Dublin as a prisoner. This very questionable act was undoubtedly prompted by Hugh O'Donnell, who had always coveted Lifford, and who seized upon the Castle and all his nephew's cattle the moment the latter was safely out of the way. In fact, it is more than likely that Con's arrest was one of the conditions on which Hugh agreed to join Essex against Tirlough Luineach, and in any other schemes which he might have in the north. It is satisfactory to be able to record that Con was well treated in Dublin, and very soon effected his escape, after which he hid about in the woods till Sidney sent him his pardon after Essex's death in the autumn.

Essex and his new ally did no fighting in Tyrone, for the wary Tirlough Luineach could not be induced to accept battle. "The Irish," Essex complained to the Privy Council in great disgust, "will never show fight, except upon great advantage of numbers and position."* Tirlough Luineach probably had his own reasons for avoiding a direct encounter. He was never of a provocative nature, and his own common sense, as well as that of his wife, must have warned him that he had everything to lose and nothing to gain by a pitched battle, no matter what the issue might be. Essex, however, was disappointed and contemptuous, and, wearying after a time of crowing ceaseless challenges which were never taken up, he turned his back on the invisible Tirlough Luineach, and, after burning as much of his corn as he could find, passed on into Coleraine. The alliance with O'Donnell had proved in the end of no value whatever to Essex, but of considerable value to the crafty Celt, who had not only got possession of Lifford, but had managed as well to spirit away into the wilds of Donegal the great bulk of Con's cattle, though his bargain with Essex had been that the latter should have the cattle, while O'Donnell had the land and Castles. Essex chafed bitterly over this fresh proof of native infidelity, but he was too wise to attempt the hopeless task of pursuing his false ally into the impenetrable bogs and morasses of Donegal. He contented himself with burning everything that he could find to burn, and then set his face eastwards. No adventures seem to have befallen

* Cal. State Papers. Essex to Privy Council, 1573.

him in Coleraine, and he was just preparing to cross the Bann into the McDonnell's country when his appetite for battle was assuaged—though not in the way he anticipated—by an encounter with Sorley Boy, in which Essex had so decidedly the worst of it that he was forced to abandon all idea of crossing the river and asserting his authority in the Route, and had to return to Newry *via* the left bank of the Bann and the western shore of Lough Neagh.

Essex's two years' grant had now expired, and he had no wish to renew it. The whole enterprise had proved a dismal failure, and had practically ruined its originator, who had lost everything in the venture except the favour of the Queen, who—in spite of everything—still appraised him as “a rare treasure and the principal ornament of her nobility.”* Presuming upon his one remaining asset, he crossed over to England, and there put in a personal application for a confirmation of his grant of Farney, and for the additional grant of Magee Island off the east coast of Antrim. Both applications were granted, and, with the patents in his pocket, he landed again in Ireland on July 22nd, 1576, and made for Dublin, where for three weeks he was the guest of Loftus, the Chancellor. On August 10th he set out from the capital to meet Sidney, who was returning from a visit to Connaught, and together the two rode back to Dublin. On the following day Essex was—by the Queen's command—invested by the Deputy with the commission of Earl Marshal of Ireland for the remainder of his life. His tenure of this office was unhappily short. A week after his investiture he was taken ill of dysentery, and on September 22nd he died, after writing a touching letter to the Queen, in which he commended his ten-year-old son Robert to her tender care.†

Essex was thirty-six years of age when he died. It was supposed by some—and more especially by his secretary, Sir Edward Waterhouse—that he had been poisoned at the instigation of Leicester, who certainly married the widow with most indecent haste; but the evidence against Leicester is not convincing, and we may reasonably assume that Essex's death was a natural one. Essex's last act was his worst, and though it was not carried out under his direct eye, it is fully

* Queen to Essex, April 11th, 1575.

† Shirley's “History of Monaghan.”

established that he gave exact instructions to his Lieutenant as to the procedure to be followed. There is more than a suspicion that the whole revolting business was undertaken partly to avenge his recent discomfiture at the hands of Sorley Boy on the Bann, and partly to minimize in the Queen's mind the barrenness of his Ulster performances.

It will be remembered that, by a very clear breach of faith on the part of the Queen, Rathlin Island had been included in the schedule of lands which Essex was commissioned to plant with English settlers. When Essex returned south after his abortive expedition into Tyrone and Coleraine, he left orders with John Norris, the Constable of Belfast, to proceed north, with 300 foot and 80 horse, and inflict all the injury possible on Sorley Boy and his belongings. In conformity with these instructions Norris set out in July, 1575, with three English frigates in attendance. The co-operation of the frigates put completely out of court any question of successful opposition on the sea coast, and Sorley Boy, "with all his gentlemen,"* withdrew to Brian Carragh's country in Loughinshollin, on the fringe of Glenconkein, while the wives and children of the settlement were sent across to Rathlin Island. Norris, contrary to Sorley Boy's expectations, paid no attention to the male members of the clan, but concentrated all his efforts on the Island. Boats from his frigates conveyed his troops across the five miles of water, and a landing was effected on July 22nd. Three days were then spent in bombarding the Castle, following which an assault was launched, in the course of which the Constable of the Castle was killed, but the attack was beaten off. The garrison of 40 men then called for a parley, and the Captain in command came out and asked that they should all be put across to Scotland. This was refused, and finally the inmates of the Castle to the number of 200, 80 per cent. of whom were women and children, came out unconditionally, and were all butchered out of hand, except the Captain, his wife and children.† The soldiers then hunted the island, which is five miles long by a mile in breadth, and from caves and rocks dragged out 400 more of the McDonnell women and children, all of whom were massacred.

Essex in his triumphant report of the total extermination of

* Essex to Walsingham, July 31st, 1575.

† Carew MSS. Essex to Queen, July 31st, 1575.

the Scotch population of the island, says that Sorley Boy from the mainland was a witness of the bloody work "and was like to have run mad with sorrow,"* which in the circumstances is not surprising.

The Rathlin Island massacre is the blackest spot in Elizabeth's administration of Ulster. It was an act of barbarism for which there was no shadow of justification. By the terms of the arrangement entered into with Captain Piers, the island had been definitely assigned to Sorley Boy, in consideration of his evacuating the mainland for six months. He had evacuated it for four years, in order that the English Plantation scheme might have a fair trial. When this had finally been proved a failure he had returned, not in any spirit of aggression against the English, for—as we have seen—he had been of signal service to the Carrickfergus garrison in an emergency, but with the idea of once more peaceably occupying the lands which were his by inheritance.

The Rathlin Island incident seems at the time to have excited neither horror nor even adverse criticism. The Queen, in fact, highly commended Norris for his conduct of the affair; nor do we read that Essex's dying hours (during which he gave evidence of a high standard of piety) were in the smallest degree disturbed by the ghosts of his innocent victims. Loftus wrote to Burleigh: "If my judgment be anything, there hath been seldom more true honour and virtue put in any nobleman than is in him." Sorley Boy's opinion, however, was otherwise. Essex himself was beyond the reach of his vengeance, but his instrument, John Norris, was not: for he and most of the troops that had taken part in the Rathlin Island expedition were in Carrickfergus. On the 6th September, *i.e.*, just six weeks after the massacre, Sorley Boy, at the head of a force mainly composed of the fathers, brothers and sons of the Island victims, was responsible for a deed of extraordinary and, indeed, of unprecedented daring. For the first time in the history of Ireland a strong English garrison was assaulted in its own fortress. Animated with an intense fury at the thought of the butchery of their wives and children, the McDonnells hurled themselves against the ramparts of Carrickfergus. The garrison consisted of Captain John Norris's and Captain Baker's companies, both of which had taken part in the massacre.

* Essex to Walsingham, July 31st, 1575.

In addition to these, Captain Mackworth, who was Constable at the time, armed all the able-bodied townsmen, and made them line the ramparts alongside of the regulars. They required little persuasion, for no one had any illusions as to the fate that awaited all if Sorley Boy broke through. A most desperate battle ensued. The Scots failed to actually penetrate the town, but the Dublin Privy Council had to admit that the victory was theirs. Captain Baker, and no fewer than 100 of the regulars were killed, and sixteen of the armed civilians, including those prominent citizens, Webster Elderton and Jeffory Grafton.* The material losses of the garrison were also very serious, for in his retirement Sorley Boy managed to carry off with him everything on four legs that the town possessed.

After the above bloody fight at Carrickfergus, Sorley Boy sulkily withdrew to the Glynns, and from that rocky retreat plotted, and indeed openly threatened, fresh reprisals against the murderers of his women-folk. Carrickfergus, shaken to its foundations by the ferocity of the recent assault, was nervous and uneasy. Only too acutely did the townspeople realize that their lives and all their belongings hung in the balance. Prompt action of one kind or another seemed urgently called for. Only one man in Ireland, however, was capable of dealing with the situation. Everyone recognized that. The one man was Sidney. Sidney had only just landed on Irish soil, but the very first call upon his remarkable powers was from the frightened men of Carrickfergus. Would he come, they pleaded, and pacify the outraged Sorley Boy? Sidney recognized the seriousness of the situation, and at once set out for the north with the absurdly inadequate force of 600 foot, hurriedly collected. He reached the Glynns early in October, and at once summoned Sorley Boy to come before him and explain his recent conduct. Nothing could be more eloquent of Sidney's extraordinary personality, or of the calming influence of his anachronous sense of fair play, than the result of this interview with Sorley Boy. The Scot who, in the passes of his own rocky and wooded Glynns, could probably have crushed Sidney's little force without difficulty, was soothed into tameness by the mere rumour of his approach. Sidney found him reasonable and submissive, but still chafing bitterly over the Rathlin affair, in which he complained that some of his own

* McSkimmin's "History of Carrickfergus."

children had been killed. Sidney was by no means insensible to the justice of the old chief's grievance, and he gave substantial proof of his sympathy by at once withdrawing the Rathlin garrison and handing the island back to Sorley Boy. In order to justify this rather revolutionary action in high quarters, he invented the excuse that the island had no fresh-water. As a matter of fact it abounds in excellent springs.

Having in this way smoothed over the main trouble, Sidney then went on to the Route, where, as a part of the arrangement which had been come to with Sorley Boy, he turned that chief's eldest son, Donald Gorm, out of some of the McQuillin's lands on which he had recently encroached. This done, he turned south again, and on his return journey visited Carrickfergus. In view of the late peril which had threatened the entire community, the Deputy made a thorough inspection of the town defences. The town, as it then stood, was in the form of a triangle, with the old Abbey of St. Francis—at that time rechristened the "Palace," and converted into a common storehouse—forming the north-east corner. So demoralized were the inhabitants by the various attacks of the past three years, that Sidney found only five families of repute still remaining. The turf rampart which surrounded the town had in many places crumbled away, and was in any case a most inadequate defence against the attacks of a strong and determined enemy. Sidney promised that he would have it replaced by a stone wall.* Buoyed up by this promise, and by Sidney's report of his compromise with Sorley Boy, the townsmen recovered their confidence, and we learn that, within two years of Sidney's visit, the population had risen once more to 200. The town by that time owned 40 fishing boats and 60 ploughs. There were two market days a week to which ships came from England, Scotland, the Isle of Man and France, the latter bringing good Gascony wine, a hogshead of which the merchants were glad to barter for eight good cowhides. Local trade also revived now that Smith's foolish restrictions had been removed, as a result of which fat beeves were brought in from the country round which fetched 6s. 8d. a head, as well as numbers of eggs, of which 20 could be bought for a penny.†

* McSkimmin's "History of Carrickfergus."

† Sidney to Walsingham, March 1583. By 1597 the price of beeves had risen to 26s. 8d. a head.

CHAPTER VI

Tirlough Luineach assists McQuillin and kills Donald Gorm—He is reproved by Sidney—Applies for title of Earl of Omagh—Con McCalvagh—Sidney restores his lands—O'Donnell's arrears of rent—McMahon and Magennis—The O'Neil's objections to the minor chiefs paying rent to the Crown—Sidney leaves Ireland for ever—Drury appoints Deputy—He summons Tirlough Luineach to the Blackwater—Dungannon puts away his wife and marries Tirlough Luineach's daughter.

SIDNEY had established Sorley Boy in the possession of Rathlin Island, but he had, at the same time, turned his eldest son, Donald Gorm, out of the southern part of the Route in favour of the McQuillins, who had undoubtedly the older title to the land. Donald Gorm, as may be supposed, was by no means satisfied with this judgment, and the Deputy's back had hardly been turned before he began gently pushing the McQuillins out again. These in turn appealed to Tirlough Luineach, who, in response, came across the Bann and settled the dispute by the old-fashioned but effective expedient of killing Donald Gorm and a goodly number of his followers. This was hardly in itself an offence of the first magnitude, for—as Tirlough Luineach justly pointed out—he was merely enforcing the land boundaries marked out by the Deputy himself. None the less it was not—in the interests of Government authority—a lapse to be lightly looked over, seeing that Lady Agnes, only three months before, had undertaken on behalf of her lord that he would not break the peace with the Sorley Boy faction.

Tirlough Luineach was accordingly ordered to come to Newry and give an explanation of his conduct to the Deputy. No native chief had any fears of treachery or of underhand dealings where Sidney was concerned, and—instead of sending his wife as he had done when Fitzwilliam was Deputy—the O'Neil now answered the summons in person, without hesitation or distrust. In order to suitably celebrate the occasion, he brought with him £400 in cash, which he managed to spend

in three days, during the whole of which period he, and all his retinue, were happily drunk.* Tirlough Luineach, when sufficiently recovered, was sternly rebuked by the Deputy for his late breach of the peace. He was told that, in consequence of this act of aggression, he must greatly reduce the number of his hired Scots, so as to put it beyond his power to commit similar depredations in the future. To this condition Tirlough Luineach humbly agreed, and in return was given the custody of Henry McShane, whom Sidney had brought with him (probably for this very purpose). Tirlough Luineach further petitioned for the title of Earl of Omagh, but this was not granted him. He was offered in substitution the title of Earl of Claneconnell, but this did not attract him, and the title was, in fact, never used.

Tirlough Luineach was, unfortunately, a slave to drink, but he was none the less a man of many good qualities. Not the least admirable trait in his character was his unswerving devotion to his son-in-law, Con McCalvagh. This unfortunate man had written a long and pathetic letter to the Queen ten years before, in which he set out the tale of his many wrongs. His chief grievance was that he had been kept for three years a prisoner by Shane O'Neil, and had thereby been defrauded of his inheritance, which had, in the meanwhile, been usurped by that base opportunist, Hugh McManus. Elizabeth had replied in suitable terms, expressing sympathy with his misfortunes, and promising that she would do her best to have him appointed the official tanist; in the meanwhile Fitzwilliam—who was Deputy at the time—was instructed to make him an allowance of 6s. 8d. a day. The pension had been regularly paid, but nothing had been done to reinstate him in his lost lands, till Sidney took the matter in hand in 1577, and with his usual thoroughness carried it through. The astonishing part of the business, and a standing monument to Sidney's powers, was that not only did he put through a transaction which must have been painfully distasteful to O'Donnell, but he actually succeeded, in addition, in extracting from that slippery chief £1,000 arrears of rent long owing to the Crown, without bloodshed or any threatening display of force. Hugh McManus remained the O'Donnell, but Con was reinstated in his old possessions of Castle Finn and Lifford, and of all the lands be-

* Carew MSS., Aug. 1574.

tween. Having in this way disposed of the Donegal difficulty, Sidney next turned his attention to the cases of McMahon and Magennis. The former was £440 in arrear of rent, and this he claimed he was not able at the moment to make good; but he undertook to pay up as soon as possible, and in the meanwhile both he and Magennis agreed to abolish the tanistry system, and to hold their lands direct from the Crown, on the primogeniture principle, for an annual payment of 250 beeves. As the value of store cattle was at the time 5s. or under, the exaction can hardly be called excessive. The question of rent was then—as ever—the main source of trouble between England and Ireland. The rents demanded by the Crown were—as has been shown—absurdly small, and many of the more enlightened among the lesser chiefs were quite prepared and indeed willing to pay them; but the disturbing factor was always the O'Neil, first Con Bacagh, then Shane, then in a lesser degree Tirlough Luineach, and, last but not least, Hugh. The objections of the O'Neils were based on the traditional idea that the lesser Ulster chiefs were their urraghs, or vassals, who should pay rent to no one but themselves; and, as the rent paid to the Crown diminished the resources on which they could themselves draw, they not only refused to pay any rent themselves, but threatened with fire and sword any and all who did. When the threat was carried out—as it very frequently was—it then became the duty of the Deputy to retaliate on the offending O'Neil by a punitive expedition into his country. Here we have the cause of all the Ulster troubles of the sixteenth century. Grasping chiefs very little removed from brigands, and in any case most pitiless tyrants over their own serfs, viewed with a jealous and sordid eye the alienation of even a fraction of their prospective plunder. They lacked the intelligence to see that their own financial interests lay in paying the small head-rent, and cultivating the country into productiveness, rather than in wasting the country and thinning the population by their everlasting armed protests, which merely had the effect of making the country incapable of paying rent to anybody.

In the autumn of 1578 Sidney left Ireland for ever, if we can believe his own account, a very much poorer man than he had come,* and his place was taken by Drury. Drury's ad-

* Sidney to Walsingham, March, 1583.

ministration, and that of Grey who succeeded him, was uneventful as far as the northern province of Ireland was concerned. The confidence and tranquillity that had followed on Sidney's politic dealings with the chiefs lasted throughout Drury's term of office. It was beginning to wane when Grey took up the reins of Government, but that functionary's entire energies were needed to deal with Desmond's rebellion in the south, and the north was left pretty much to itself. Every attempt was made to drag Ulster into the southern rebellion, but though Tirlough Luineach made occasional demonstrations in force in the direction of the Pale, he showed no disposition to be actively aggressive. It is more than probable that his wife now proved the "wise counsellor" that Sidney had described her, and that she prevented her lord from being weakly dragged into a bloody contest of which she foresaw that the inevitable end must be defeat. Lady Agnes's efforts in this direction, if not proved, were at any rate strongly suspected by the Queen, and, in recognition of her supposed good offices, she was presented with one of Elizabeth's magnificent velvet dresses, which, however, we are told, was so damaged in places by Her Majesty's untidy fashion of eating that it had to be provided with a new lap before presentation.*

In 1579 Tirlough Luineach responded to a summons by Drury to meet him at the Blackwater fort. The O'Neil was at that time popularly supposed to be on the high road to the grave. He had been shot in the stomach, some little time before, by a ball from a caliver, which his jester Donnelly had accidentally let off during a carouse at Tirlough Luineach's Castle at Strabane.† The natural vigour of his constitution must have been remarkable, for—in spite of his habitual potations—he eventually made a complete recovery. At the time of his meeting with Drury, he was still too weak to ride, and he was carried 40 miles in a litter to the place of meeting. He wore the high steeped-crowned taffeta hat set with bugles that the Earl of Argyle had given him as a wedding present, and we are told that he also affected the "glibbe," or shaggy mane of hair, which the habit of the Irish was to shake over their eyes when questioned, so that their expression should not give them away.

* Gerrard to Walsingham, Jan. 8th, 1579.

† "Hibernia Anglicana."

Tirlough Luineach, as usual, was drunk most of the time, but sober enough to effect his main object, which was to persuade the Baron of Dungannon, who was with Drury, to put away his second wife, Joan O'Donnell, and marry one of his own daughters, whom he had diplomatically brought with him for the purpose. Tirlough Luineach hoped that this transaction would have the double effect of creating a rupture between O'Donnell and Dungannon, and of attaching the latter to his own party; while Dungannon, who--like everyone else--thought that Tirlough Luineach's days were numbered, calculated that, with the O'Neil's daughter as his wife, he might safely consider that he had one foot already on the coronation-stone at Tullahogue.

Drury, who greatly feared an alliance between the two branches of the O'Neils, did all in his power to prevent the affair from going through, but without success. The marriage was then and there solemnized, Dungannon, at the same time, giving a very young child of his in marriage to Ross McMahon. Tirlough Luineach was delighted with the success of his diplomatic efforts, and, in the course of the carouse which followed, he genially nominated Dungannon his tanist. This last transaction, however, was prudently kept a secret, in deference to the well-known prejudices of the Queen against the tanistry system.

In the course of the discussion which took place fifteen years later in the matter of Mabel Bagenal's marriage to the Earl of Tyrone, efforts were made to prove that the marriage was not legal on the grounds that Tyrone had not taken the proper steps to divorce his former wife, Joan O'Donnell. In this discussion no mention is made of Tirlough Luineach's daughter, which might at first be construed into *primâ facie* evidence that the marriage of Tyrone (or Dungannon, as he was at the time) with that lady did not take place. It is quite clear, however, that, if the object at the time was to prove that the marriage of Tyrone with Mabel Bagenal was irregular because he was still tied to Joan O'Donnell, no intervening alliance would affect the point in question, because any such alliance would have been equally irregular. That Dungannon was married to Tirlough Luineach's daughter both in form and substance is unquestionable. The evidence is as strong as evidence can be on any historical point in sixteenth-century

Ireland. On February 11th, 1579, Drury wrote to Burleigh to the effect that Dungannon was contemplating the marriage, which he himself was combating and with apparent success. On February 22nd Treasurer Fyton wrote to Burleigh announcing that Dungannon was again proposing to marry Tirlough Luineach's daughter. Then, on March 30th, Drury definitely informed the Privy Council that "Dungannon has taken Tirlough Luineach's daughter, and sent away his wife."

It is, however, probable that the alliance was of very short duration, and that, the moment his political differences with Tirlough Luineach arose over the land question, Tyrone unceremoniously turned the lady out into the cold.

CHAPTER VII

The tanistry system—Coyne, livery and bonaght—Oppression of the peasantry by the chiefs—Armed forces—Spenser's description of the kerne and gallowglasses—Inability of the chiefs to control their men—The case of Phelim McTirlough O'Neil—The apotheosis of the O'Neil—Low estimate of the peasantry by their chiefs—Sidney's sympathy with the peasantry—The accumulating evil of the tanistry system.

PROSAIC regularity, which makes for an orderly sequence of events, is abhorrent to the Celtic mind, and more particularly is this the case where a happy uncertainty surrounds the alternative, as for instance, when a suddenly-created vacancy requires filling by the popular voice, or some other capricious referendum. In such a case, anything in the nature of assured routine is fatal to the pleasurable excitement which circulates when ardent partisanship runs riot, and is therefore universally unpopular. The basic cause of this unpopularity, in common with the basic cause of most human likes and dislikes, when stripped of make-believe, is plainly sordid. No honest analyst of motives can get away from this unromantic conclusion. In cases, that is to say, where automatic succession is unpopular, it is unpopular because, by eliminating the element of partisanship, it also eliminates the expected guerdon of the partisan, which is, after all, the driving power of all elections, whether decided by the ballot or the sword. The tanistry system, which in plain English meant a general scramble for a dead chief's assets by all his nearest relatives, was for this reason universally popular in Ireland, except among the peasantry and agriculturists, who formed part of the assets scrambled for, and who generally got killed in the scramble. In English high quarters the tanistry system had long been looked upon as the fundamental curse of the country. Henry VIII. had been the first to recognize that most of the ills of Ireland were traceable in one way or another to this common root.

Tanistry may be defined as the ancient Irish custom, accord-

ing to which the succession to a vacant chieftry rested upon popular favour instead of on the established rights of primogeniture. In the present democratic age, when the tendency is to substitute as far as possible the elective principle for the hereditary, a revival of the tanistry system would find many supporters. It must be remembered, however, that in Ireland in the sixteenth century the popular voice—as at present understood—made no sound in these county elections. Armed force—usually foreign and imported—was the factor which decided the contest with cold steel, always bared and sometimes reddened. The inevitable effect of such a system was that, during the lifetime of the reigning chiefs, every potential candidate kept in his train as many armed retainers as his resources would permit of, with the idea that, when the crucial moment arrived, there might be a substantial argument at the back of his official claim. The effect was to burden the country with a mass of idle, cruel and dissolute men, who were an intolerable infliction to the peasantry. Sussex, though himself a gross and clumsy administrator, and by no means free from the charge of adopting native methods, had sufficient discrimination to gauge the enormity of the evil. “The election to the captaincy of the country,” he says in his report on the state of Ireland in 1562, “is the chief cause why the Irish do keep great numbers of idle men of war, that thereby they might be the stronger, hoping by their strength to be the liker to be elected captain upon an election. These men of war, being brought up and fed with idleness, cannot be restrained in time of peace from stealing and a number of other enormities. To maintain them in their life, they have finding and expenses upon the country, whereby be brought in coyne, livery, bonaght, and all other Irish exactions, which be the only ground and causes of all the uncivil and detestable orders of this realm.”

The coyne, livery and bonaght referred to may be briefly explained as follows :

“Coyne” was a licence to the armed bands to take from those on whom they were billeted everything that they wanted in kind ; “livery” was a similar licence in respect of their horses. “Bonaght,” which was the worst of the three, was a tax by which the unhappy tillers of the soil were made to find the military pay of the kerne and gallowglasses quartered upon them. The term “bonaghts,” in the plural, was also

loosely used to designate the bands who were maintained on the bonaght system. It may be easily understood, then, that the bonaghts were as welcome to the Irish peasantry as locusts to the Egyptians. The kerne and gallowglasses who were free-quartered on the people were a law unto themselves, and did with the peasants as they would. What their treatment of these poor wretches was may be gathered from the following observations of the poet Spenser. "These" (the kerne and gallowglasses) "be, I think, the most barbarous and loathely conditions under heaven, for from the time that they enter into that course" (coyne, livery and bonaght) "they do use all the beastly behaviour that may be. They oppress all men, they spoil as well the subject as the enemy; they steal, they are cruel and bloody, full of revenge and delighting in daily executions; licentious, swearers and blasphemers, common ravishers of women and murderers of children." If the chiefs had been in a position to exercise any control or discipline over these men of war the position of the peasants might have been more tolerable, but they were not. Most of them were afraid of their own fighting men. They could lead them for evil, but they were quite powerless either to check or punish their excesses. Henry Bagenal, who had been born in Ireland and who knew Ulster in and out, declared that both Tirlough Luineach and Dungannon were afraid of their followers; and this is borne out in a letter which Mr. Solicitor Wilbraham wrote to Burleigh in December, 1591. "Neither Tirlough Luineach nor the Earl dare punish their followers," he writes. In the case of Dungannon (better known as the Earl of Tyrone) we have repeated evidence that he was quite powerless to control his followers, and he himself frankly admitted as much after the execution of Hugh Roe McMahon in 1591, when he excused his rebellion on the grounds that he too—like McMahon—ran a risk of being executed for this or that act of his followers over which he had no control. We get a rather interesting insight into the inability of this great chief to exercise any restraining influence over those who were nominally his followers in the circumstances surrounding the murder of Phelim McTirlough O'Neil in 1592. Tyrone (as he then was), who was at the time at Castle Toome, on the northern shore of Lough Neagh, sent for Phelim to come and see him, under a guarantee of safe conduct. Phelim

came, and he and Tyrone walked together to the banks of the river Bann, where they had their talk. Tyrone then crossed the river in a cot, and was barely at the other side before "Owen, Hugh and Henry O'Hagan came to Phelim and flattered him, putting hands about his neck. Then presently the said Owen, who clasped him about the neck, drew his sword and struck off one of his hands." (To prevent him defending himself.) "Then the other two struck at him, wherewith he was mortally wounded."* Tyrone was asked by the O'Cahans a fortnight later if he would not take steps to punish the O'Hagans for violating his safe conduct, but he gave an evasive reply, and we know that he took no such steps.

In 1594, again, Tyrone, after his interview with Sir Robert Gardiner, begged that Captain Lee and Garrett Moore, who were both personal friends of his, might ride back part of the way with him, which they were glad to do. But, as soon as they got into Tyrone's country, the O'Hagans threatened the two Englishmen with their spears and drove them back in spite of their chief's protests. The actual relations existing between chiefs and people were curious. It would seem as though the former figured rather as semi-deities than as material leaders. The primitive god punishes or rewards according to his mood, which is more often than not malevolent. In the light of this interpretation of deity, the more notable Ulster chiefs were undoubtedly little gods, for their power over life, limb and property was absolute. As gods, too, their persons were sacred. Mountjoy put a price of 2,000 marks on Tyrone alive, and 1,000 marks dead, but no man could be found to lay a hand on him. The curious feature of the case, however, is that the religious atmosphere which surrounded the person of the chief was very far from giving him full executive authority. This, in Tyrone's case, was vested in the O'Hagans; in the case of Shane in the Donnelly's.

To return to the bonaght system, the absence of any head control or restrictive discipline left the peasants wholly at the mercy of the fighting men, from whom they received none. The Irish peasants of the sixteenth century were reckoned by their chiefs, and by the standing armies of their chiefs, as of less account than cattle. Neil Garv frankly told Doewra in 1601 that he would not have cared a straw if 1,000 of his people had

* Ever McRory O'Neil to Deputy, Cal. State Papers 1593, Vol. 170, 14.

died of a famine of his own creation. Nor was it as though the peasantry could look to the armed parasites who sucked their blood for protection from outside enemies. Such was far from being the case. At the first approach of enemy raiders they were left to their fate, and as the success of a tribal invasion was solely gauged by the number of cattle seized, and the number of defenceless inhabitants killed, the only hope of the latter lay in effective concealment. Sidney, who passed through Connaught at a time when one chief's swordsmen were raiding a neighbour's peasantry, was filled with pity for the state of the poor hunted natives, who, "almost distraught out of their wits by daily terror for their lives, would have moved the stoniest heart to pity."

In the eyes of the wise-heads of England these chronic tribal massacres were all due to the tanistry system, and both Henry VIII. and Elizabeth worked assiduously to substitute the custom of primogeniture, but it is to be doubted whether in this endeavour they had the whole-hearted support of their officers in Ireland. These had their own axes to grind, and a peaceful and contented Ireland was not wholly to their financial advantage. So the tanistry system continued to flourish. The evil was, in fact, a growing one, for it is obviously easier and pleasanter to do no work and to rob and kill those who do, than to work and be killed for doing so. The ranks of the swordsmen were therefore being constantly recruited from among those who would otherwise have been cultivating the soil, so that as the burden on the land increased so did its productiveness decrease. Another evil of the system, as Perrot pointed out to the Privy Council ten years later, was that "men care but for their own time when they cannot build for their children." Although the attempt to substitute the primogeniture custom for the tanistry system was very far from popular, many of the minor chiefs, such as Magennis, O'Hanlon and O'Reilly, expressed a welcome appreciation of the proposed change. The acquiescence, however, of living chiefs had obviously no binding effect on a situation which could only arise after their death. The moment this occurred, the dead chief's conversion to the new system counted for nothing, and all his relations at once began fighting for the vacancy with the usual sacrifice of innocents.

CHAPTER VIII

Tirlough Luineach nominates Shane Oge his tanist—Release of Shane's sons—Henry McShane—His misfortunes—His brothers—Con McCalvagh becomes Tirlough Luineach's commander-in-chief—Tirlough Luineach's expedition against the O'Reillys—Death of Shane Oge—Capture of Con—Energetic action of Tirlough Luineach—Death of Con McCalvagh—His character—Fight at Drumleen—Hugh Gallagher—Hugh Roe O'Donnell—His alliance with Tyrone's daughter—His capture by Perrot.

THE official nomination of Dungannon as tanist was a serious blow to the aspirations of Shane's sons, and it was not long before Tirlough Luineach himself bitterly repented of his rash move. The Blackwater carouse, indeed, was the last occasion on which the O'Neil and the future Earl of Tyrone appeared as anything but candid enemies. The first serious breach was caused by Dungannon's shameful treatment of his new wife, who, after a few years, succumbed to ill-usage and neglect. Tirlough Luineach felt the affront to his blood very deeply, and, after his lands had several times been raided and harried by his son-in-law, he felt that it was time to act. He accordingly made a public repudiation of his rash nomination, and, in place of the treacherous and ungrateful Dungannon, named Shane Oge O'Neil (a son of old Shane) as his official tanist.* Both Shane Oge, and his brothers Henry and Con, had up to this point been Tirlough Luineach's prisoners, but, in order to signalize his change of attitude, and his final renunciation of his unworthy son-in-law, they were all three now released. It would seem that at first Tirlough Luineach was in some little doubt as to which of the three to select, but Tyrone's letter to Drury makes it quite clear that Shane Oge was his final choice, being probably preferred before Con on account of his name, and of his pure Irish blood. Henry, the eldest, was never in any sense an eligible candidate, any spirit he might originally have inherited having been crushed out of him long back by protracted imprisonment. His father, Shane, had originally left

* Tyrone to Drury, Jan. 1579.

this most unfortunate man in Dublin Castle as a pledge for his own good behaviour ; but though—by the custom of the times—Henry's life had been forfeited by the rebellious and defiant acts of his father, the punishment was not exacted. Henry was kept in confinement till 1575, when Sidney took him away with him on his expedition to the north, and he was transferred into the keeping of Tirlough Luineach, as part of a bargain arrived at. Tirlough Luineach kept Henry for nine years, but in 1584—thinking, no doubt, to relieve himself of a prisoner who was of no political value, and, at the same time, to gain favour with the Deputy—he took him to Newry and there formally transferred him into the keeping of Sir John Perrot. So poor Henry went back once more to Dublin Castle, where he joined his brother Art. Tyrone did his best to get Perrot to hang the two brothers,* but without success, and in 1591 they both escaped, in company with Hugh Roe O'Donnell. Art died on the way, but Henry and Hugh Roe succeeded in reaching Dungannon, where the latter was sent on his way with a blessing, and the former put in chains by Tyrone. At Dungannon Henry once more found a brother as a fellow-prisoner, in the shape of Brian, and later on Con was destined to join them ; after which the three brothers were separated, two being kept in Leinster and one in Ulster on different islands or “Crannogs.”

In 1580 Dungannon, though discarded and disinherited by the reigning O'Neil, was still the Government nominee for the succession, and—in spite of several most uncivilized lapses—was still Elizabeth's hope for the regeneration of Ulster. The chance of his peaceable accession—in spite of all his shortcomings—was enhanced by the striking unworthiness of all the other eligible candidates. At the time when Tirlough Luineach disowned Dungannon as his tanist and successor, Shane's sons were all in very low water, and with no pronounced following, outside of the Donnelly sept. Henry, Con and Shane Oge were Tirlough Luineach's prisoners, Art and Hugh were in Scotland, Brian was Dungannon's prisoner, and Tirlough, the youngest, was living in great poverty and under English protection in Carrickfergus.† Tirlough Luineach's eldest and favourite son Henry had been accidentally killed in 1578, during an unsuccessful raid into the O'Gallagher country

* H. Hoveden to Deputy, Jan. 30th, 1585.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 178, 72.

(central Donegal), and his two surviving sons, Art and Cormac, were degenerates of little account. The sons of Tirlough Braselagh, the representatives of the elder branch of the O'Neils, were the only other possible candidates, and they had but a scanty backing.

Tirlough Luineach's selection of Shane Oge as his tanist was only tentative, and was not destined to have any marked effect on the future course of events, for reasons which came about as follows: Tirlough Luineach, in his younger days, had been a good warrior, in fact he had been Shane's chief commander in the field; but, as he grew older, his military ardour rather abated, and of later years he had left active operations in the field to others, and devoted himself exclusively to the wine flagon. So deep were his potations that in 1583 he was actually reported dead, and was, in fact, laid out with honours in his Castle of Strabane. The inevitable sycophant galloped over to Dungannon and imparted the glad tidings to the Baron, who immediately betook himself to Tullahogue, and there went through the ceremony of investiture. Tirlough Luineach, however, was not dead, but only very drunk, and, after lying in a death-like trance for twenty-four hours, he astonished the assembled mourners by getting up and walking unsteadily away.*

Tirlough Luineach's most trusted, and at the same time his most successful, general in the field was his favourite son-in-law, Con McCalvagh, of whom he was extremely fond; in fact, the affection between these two was of a very remarkable order. It will be remembered that, when Essex persuaded O'Donnell to join him against Tirlough Luineach, Con stoutly refused to be a party to the transaction. He was in consequence arrested and sent to Dublin Castle, to the unmeasured joy of his wicked uncle O'Donnell, who promptly seized upon Con's strongholds of Lifford and Castle Finn, as well as upon all his cattle. Tirlough Luineach strongly suspected O'Donnell of having instigated Con's arrest for his own evil ends, and from that time on the two were at bitter, though somewhat desultory, enmity. Con very soon effected his escape from Dublin Castle with the friendly connivance of Sidney, to whom the injustice of Essex's high-handed action was apparent. But, though free, Con found himself practically homeless, and without a following, and, in

* Fenton to Walsingham, June 19th, 1583,

this predicament, his father-in-law took him in and found him a home in Strabane.

Con now became the recognized commander of Tirlough Luineach's field forces, and in 1581 he inflicted a very heavy defeat on his uncle at Kiltole, near Raphoe. Six hundred of the O'Donnells were killed, and Sir John O'Dogherty and McSweeney Dogh were taken prisoners. The former died very shortly afterwards. After the battle, the two rival chiefs moved eastwards, and encamped on opposite sides of the Foyle, while their respective wives—Lady Agnes and Ineenduv—carried on political negotiations across the water. No negotiations, however, could cancel the legitimate fruits of victory, and Lifford passed once more into the hands of Con, the son of Calvagh. Con was not destined to enjoy his recovered possessions for long. His health had for some time past been failing, and it soon became apparent to Tirlough Luineach that he would have to look out for a new commander. The obvious person indicated by all the circumstances was Shane Oge, and, shortly after the battle of Kiltole, Tirlough Luineach resolved to give this son of old Shane a trial. A suitable opportunity was found in the unpopular behaviour of Sir Hugh O'Reilly, who for some time past had been conducting himself as a law-abiding citizen, and in various other ways outraging the time-honoured traditions of Ulster. Shane Oge, accompanied by his brother Con, was sent with 300 horsemen to bring this misguided chief to a more suitable frame of mind. At first the enterprise went smoothly enough. No opposition was met with, and the usual work of devastation and indiscriminate slaughter proceeded quite satisfactorily, till the raiders unsuspectingly rode into an ambush, which had been skilfully laid for them by O'Reilly's two sons John and Philip. The O'Reillys had only been able to get together 34 horse and 40 foot, but the overthrow of the invaders from Tyrone was immediate and thorough. Shane and five others were killed,* his brother Con was taken prisoner, and the remainder spurred vigorously for home.†

The capture of Con roused Tirlough Luineach from his habitual lethargy, and, putting himself at the head of a formidable army, he bore down on the O'Reillys, and promptly de-

* Carew MSS., Sept. 1581.

† Sir N. Maltby to Leicester, Sept. 21st, 1581. Loftus to Privy Council, Oct. 1581.

manded Con's release. Sir Hugh had no option but to comply. He had no army with which to face Tirlough Luineach's numbers, and Con McShane went back to Strabane. It was freely rumoured that Tirlough Luineach then nominated Con McShane as his tanist in the place of his dead brother, but it is quite certain that he did not repeat the experiment of putting his armed forces under the command of an amateur, for six months later, *i.e.*, in the spring of 1582, we find Con McCalvagh once more conducting a raiding party into Sligo. Very little opposition was met with, and the greater part of Sligo was wasted and pillaged, and the town itself burnt.* This proved to be Con McCalvagh's last appearance in the field, for his health now declined very rapidly, and in March, 1583, he died. He had inherited many of the good qualities of his father Calvagh. He was an able commander in the field, and of a generous and honest disposition. Cusack, who liked him greatly as a boy, had taught him to both speak and write English. The Four Masters' tribute to his memory does not add greatly to his renown: "He was a sedate and affable man," they say, "who spent much of his wealth in the purchase of poems and panegyrics." Poor Con's "wealth" during the greater part of his life was limited to the 6s. 8d. per day which was allowed him by the English Government.

Tirlough Luineach now found himself in some difficulty in the matter of a military commander. After the disastrous failure of Shane Oge in Cavan, he was not greatly inclined to entrust his armed forces to the leadership of either of the other sons of Shane who were at the time in his custody. The need, however, for an efficient commander was very urgent, and this fact was soon to be painfully brought home to him by the result of the battle of Drumleen. In this encounter, which took place six months only after Con McCalvagh's death, the Tyrone men were very ignominiously worsted by O'Donnell. They were forced back to the bank of the flooded Finn, and—as at Fersatmore seventeen years before—of those who took to the water in order to escape the sword a number were drowned.†

After his victory O'Donnell marched straight on to Lifford, which he levelled to the ground, and then, crossing the Mourne, burned Strabane. Tirlough Luineach, whose forces were now

* Maltby to Walsingham, July 12th, 1582. Four Masters.

† Four Masters.

completely demoralized, did not await his coming, but took himself off to the better security of Dunalong, which O'Donnell was either too careless or too cautious to invest. The disaster at Drumleen made it quite clear to Tirlough Luineach that, unless he was quite prepared to lose all his prestige and the greater part of his possessions, he had no time to lose before providing himself with an efficient commander to take the place of the late Con McCalvagh. Such a man opportunely presented himself in the shape of one Hugh Gallagher (otherwise known as Hugh McDegany) who represented himself to be a son of Calvagh O'Donnell, and therefore half-brother to the late Con. On the strength of this assumed lineage he laid claims to the lands of Lifford and Castle Finn, and appealed to Tirlough Luineach to help him against Hugh McManus, as he had helped his half-brother before him. Hugh Gallagher, as a matter of fact, was an impostor. The Four Masters will have none of his pretensions, but pronounce him to have been the son of Dean Gallagher, as most unquestionably he ought to have been. The man clearly had some military capacity, and Tirlough Luineach, recognizing this, was not disposed to look too closely into the question of his parentage, but accepted him for what he claimed to be, and appointed him his official commander-in-chief. Gallagher—for all the doubts that were thrown on his claims to O'Donnell blood—was not without a considerable following of his own in Donegal; and the alliance with Tirlough Luineach so increased his prestige and armed resources that the stability of Hugh McManus's position was for the time rather seriously threatened. It was rarely indeed, however, that a reigning chieftain was actually supplanted, and Gallagher—realizing this—wisely determined to abandon the direct quest, and to focus all his energies on the more attainable goal of the succession. In this aim he had no very formidable rival in Hugh McManus's eldest son Donnell, whose mother had been one of the many daughters of Tirlough Luineach. Donnell was a weak creature, with little of the ambition or virility of Gallagher, and if it had come to a fight between these two, Donnell's chances would have been small.

Behind Donnell, however, was a much more disturbing figure, in the shape of one Hugh Roe O'Donnell, the eldest son of Hugh McManus's second wife Ineenduv. This boy was only fourteen years of age at the time when Gallagher took over the command

of Tirlough Luineach's forces, but he was very highly spoken of, and there were many prophecies current in the country as to the great future that lay before him. There was an old tradition that, when Hugh O'Donnell the son succeeded Hugh O'Donnell the father on to the Kilmacrenan stone, Ireland would be united under one King, who was, of course, to be the second Hugh. Hugh Roe, however, had something more substantial than prophecies at the back of his claim to the succession. He had, in the first place, in his mother Ineenduv, a partisan of untiring energy and—through her Scotch connection—with exceptional opportunities for raising a formidable fighting force when required. He was also—incidentally—betrothed to an illegitimate daughter of the man whom we may in future call the Earl of Tyrone, and whose support he could therefore be assured of in any conflict for the succession. As a matter of fact—though Hugh Roe lived with this lady and was commonly reckoned as Tyrone's son-in-law, and though Tyrone speaks of him as his son-in-law at the time of his capture by Perrot*—he did not actually go through the form of marriage with her till the year 1597. He had in the meanwhile deferred the ceremony in the hopes of procuring in marriage the daughter of the Earl of Clanricarde, an alliance which would have brought the greater part of Connaught under his dominion. Only when this failed did he finally make Tyrone's daughter his legal wife.† However, even the informal alliance was a source of strength. It was common talk in the north that young Hugh Roe was the rising star of Donegal, and a star whose orbit Ineenduv was fully determined should not be interfered with by the transit of any interfering, meddling bodies. Nevertheless, it was at the outset very seriously interfered with, and that by the indirect means of Hugh Gallagher. That scheming impostor, with a view to disposing of his more formidable rival, unfolded to Perrot a plan by which young Hugh Roe might easily be snared and kept out of harm's way till the future of Ulster was more assured, and Perrot, scenting ransom in the transaction, eagerly fell in with the suggestion.

A small ship laden with strong and seductive wine was sent round to Lough Swilly. Some casks were sent ashore at Rathmullen and broached for the benefit of McSweeney Fanad and

* Tyrone to Leicester, Feb. 1588.

† Bagenal to Deputy, April 6th, 1597.

his people, who speedily became very drunk indeed.* Hugh Roe heard the good tidings—as Gallagher took very good care that he should—and was quickly on the spot. By that time the MeSweenys had disposed of most of the available supply, but the young O'Donnell's appetite was sufficiently whetted by the little that remained. He was told that no more could be landed, but that there was plenty more on the ship if he liked to make the journey across the Lough in a cot which was waiting. Hugh Roe asked for nothing better; the ship was boarded, and good Gaseony without stint was placed before him, with which he rapidly drunk himself into unconsciousness. By the time he recovered his senses he was well on his way to Dublin.

This happened in 1587. Inceenduv never forgave Gallagher for his share in the transaction, and, two years later, she managed to have him waylaid and assassinated while on his way to attend a meeting at Mongavlin. This, however, is getting ahead of events, and it is time to leave the parochial affairs of Donegal and to return to matters of wider national interest.

* Four Masters.

CHAPTER IX

Lord Grey's activity against the Scots—He lays waste the Route—Defeat of Dawtrey and Chatterton—Invasion of Fanad by the McCleans under Art and Hugh McShane—Exaggerated accounts of the numbers—Perrot's formidable preparations—Flight of the Scots—Perrot attacks the Bann country—Capture of Oliver Lambert by Brian Carragh—He is transferred to the keeping of Art and Hugh McShane—Perrot invests Dunluce Castle—Its great strength—Extermination of the garrison—Perrot returns south, leaving Bagenal in charge—Battle of Glenarm—Defeat and flight of Bagenal—Invasion of Rathlin Island—Flight of Sorley Boy—Competition between Angus McDonnell and Sorley Boy for the Glynnns—Angus obtains a grant of the Glynnns—Landing of Alexander McDonnell—He retakes Dunluce Castle and Coleraine Friary—Is defeated in Inishowen by Captain Merriman—Death of Alexander Oge McDonnell.

SIR JOHN PERROT, great as his faults may have been in other directions, was certainly one of the most energetic Deputies Ireland had yet seen. He was accused by his enemies of unduly favouring the Irish chiefs to the detriment of Her Majesty's interests; and it was further hinted that, where Her Majesty had lost, Sir John Perrot had gained, which is more than probable. With a view to distracting the Queen's attention from his questionable relations with the Irish chiefs, and the consequent dwindling of her revenues from these sources, Perrot thought it good to embark on a series of vigorous campaigns against the Scots in the north. It is true that this policy was in a sense forced upon him by events for which his predecessor was responsible. Acting on the advice of Fenton, the Permanent Secretary and the inveterate enemy of the Ulster Scots, Lord Grey had ordered Captains Dawtrey and Chatterton to muster the Carriekfergus garrison and march north to the assistance of McQuillin, who was very decidedly getting the worst of a dispute with Sorley Boy over the boundary question. On approaching the Route, the English force was joined by McQuillin and by Hugh McPhelim (Sir Brian's brother), who, since his release from Dublin Castle, had established himself—with the Government approval—in the Castle of Edenduffearrick* on the north shore of Lough Neagh. These

*₂Shane's Castle.

two chiefs were at the moment in alliance against the Scots, but were too weak to take the offensive unaided. The arrival of Dawtrey and Chatterton, however, put an altogether different complexion on the affair. The English and the Irish joined forces, and the combined party advanced over the disputed border, and was able to lay waste much of the Route without interference. Had they then returned, all might have been well, but they unfortunately overstayed the limits of prudence, with most unhappy results. The Four Masters laconically record the sequence of events as follows: "Great depredations were committed on Sorley Boy by Hugh, the son of Phelim Bacagh, by McQuillin and the English. Sorley Boy went in pursuit of the preys, defeated those who were before them, deprived them of the preys and slew Hugh McPhelim and a Company or two of the English." The truth was that the invading party was too greedy, and spent so long a time plundering, that Lady Agnes was able to send a party of Scots from Strabane across the River Bann to co-operate with Sorley Boy,* who, otherwise, would have been too weak to offer much resistance. The result was the complete overthrow of the invaders. Hugh McPhelim, Captain Chatterton and seventy of the English were killed, and all the driven prey recovered.† This disaster was naturally the subject of very unfavourable comment on the part of the Queen, but—mainly owing to the change of Deputy—no serious steps were taken to restore the Government prestige till the accession of Perrot a year later. Perrot's expedition to the north, however, was prompted by something more pressing than an altruistic desire to avenge a reverse for which his predecessor was responsible. A party of McCleans, from Scotland, really very few in number,‡ but magnified by native estimates into an army of many thousands, had landed in Lough Swilly under the leadership of Hugh and Art McShane, and had eaten bare the neighbouring district of Fanad. Their avowed aim was the re-establishment of Shane's sons (the mother of Hugh and Art had been a McClean) in the chieftainry, or at all events in the succession to the chieftainry, of O'Neil. The more immediate objects of their hostility were Dungannon, who had usurped the succession, and Tirlough Luineach, who held two

* Maltby to Burleigh, April, 1583.

† Lords Justices to Privy Council, April 29th, 1583.

‡ Privy Council to Deputy, Aug. 31st, 1584.

other sons of Shane (Henry and Con) in captivity. The invading party from Scotland was joined by O'Cahan, and—as was only to be expected—by the whole sept of Donnellys. These latter, however, only numbered some three hundred, and the whole enterprise appears to have been very far from formidable. None the less, the exaggerated accounts of the terrified McSweenys found ready credence in Dublin,* and Perrot, within two months of the day when he received the sword, got together a strong mixed force and set out to meet the Scotch menace in the north. A barque laden with provisions and convoyed by Her Majesty's ship *Handmaid*, under command of Captain Carlisle (a son-in-law of Walsingham), was ordered to co-operate by sea; and, while the land party was slowly marching north, these two ships were sent ahead with the idea of frustrating any attempt on the part of the Scots to escape by sea. These, however, somehow got news of the Deputy's intentions, and, by the time the two Government ships sailed into Lough Swilly, the McCleans were already half-way back to Scotland. Hugh and Art McShane, who had for several years past made their home in Scotland, did not return with the others, but were taken charge of by the Donnellys, and for the time being—in view of Perrot's approach—remained hidden in Gleneonkein.

Perrot, having had all the trouble of getting together his expeditionary force, had no intention of being baulked of a prey by the mere fact of the McCleans having escaped him. As soon, therefore, as he learnt that these had taken to the sea, he determined to change his objective from Donegal to the Route, a decision that was not uninfluenced by the knowledge that the two sons of Shane were in hiding somewhere to the east of the Foyle. Towards the Bann, then, he turned the head of his column. With him went the Earls of Ormonde and Thomond, the Baron of Dungannon, Sir Henry Bagenal, who had now succeeded his father as Marshal, and Sorley Boy's old enemy, Captain John Norris, of Rathlin Island fame. To provide against any possibility of a hostile flank movement on the part of Tirlough Luineach or Lady Agnes, both the O'Neil and his wife were ordered to report themselves to the Deputy on the Bann, which they obediently did. Perrot's dispositions were singularly thorough. After passing Lough Neagh he divided his forces, John Norris, his brother Henry and Dungannon

* Perrot to Privy Council, Aug. 21st, 1584.

exploring the country on the left bank of the Bann—more particularly Brian Carragh's country, which they thoroughly devastated—while Perrot himself, with the two Earls, worked the country on the right. There was nothing in the nature of a pitched battle, but desultory skirmishing took place all the time, in the course of which Henry Norris was wounded in the knee, and Mr. (afterwards Sir) Oliver Lambert was taken prisoner by Brian Carragh. Lambert, immediately upon his capture, was carried off into Glenconekin, where Brian Carragh (who was an obscure scion of the McDonald clan) handed him over to the keeping of Hugh and Art McShane. He appears to have been well treated, so well treated, in fact, that, after two months of captivity, he wrote to Perrot from the Blackwater expressing the opinion that Hugh McShane was "an honest, courteous and wise young man, civilly brought up and speaketh English."*

In the meanwhile, Perrot took possession of the Coleraine Friary and Dumferte (Ballyreagh) Castle, which was found unoccupied, and finally, towards the middle of September, arrived opposite Dunluce Castle in the Route, which was found to be garrisoned by Angus and Alexander McRandall Boy and forty Scots. "I am encamped before Dunluce," Perrot wrote to the Privy Council on September 15th, "the strongest piece of this realm, situated on a rock hanging over the sea, divided from the main with a broad deep rocky ditch, natural and not artificial, and having no way to it but a small neck of the same rock, which is also cut off very steep. It hath in it a strong ward, whereof the Captain is a natural Scot, who, when I sent to summon them to yield, refused talk, and proudly answered, speaking very good English, that they were appointed and would keep it to the last man for the King of Scotland's use."† Two days later he added in another letter, "Having shipping at hand, I have appointed from 200 to 300 footmen to go to Rathlin Island to-morrow for the taking thereof."‡ In the meanwhile a culverin and two small brass sakers from the pinnace were landed below the Castle and dragged up round the edge of the cliff. These vigorous measures proved in the end effective, but Perrot's contemplated trip to Rathlin Island

* Lambert to Deputy, Oct. 23rd, 1584.

† Perrot to Privy Council, Sept. 15th, 1584.

‡ Carew MSS., Sept. 17th, 1584.

had to be put off for many weeks, for the Scots proved as good as their word, and not till the two McRandall Boys and all the garrison had been killed, did the Castle pass into Perrot's hands.* By that time the winter was so far advanced that the Rathlin Island expedition had to be postponed to the spring, Perrot putting forward, as his excuse, a fear lest the rivers might rise with the winter rains and hinder his return. Captain Carlisle was turned from a sailor into a soldier, and put in charge of Coleraine Friary, and an Englishman named Peter Carey was left as Constable of Dunluce, with special injunctions that he should on no account give employment within the walls to any Irish, a warning, which, unhappily for him, he failed to take to heart.

Perrot himself had moved south at the end of September to Newry, where Tirlough Luineach met him with Henry McShane. Tirlough Luineach had now, in deference to Perrot's wishes, which were a reflection of the wishes of the Queen, once more made Dungannon his tanist;† and, as a kind of earnest of his sincerity in this matter, he now formally handed Henry, the eldest of Shane's sons, back into the keeping of the Deputy.‡ So poor Henry returned with Perrot to Dublin, and once more became a tenant of the Castle. John Norris was left for another month in Antrim, to continue the campaign against the Scots,§ but he failed to accomplish anything further, and at the end of October he returned to Munster, of which he was President, with the added dignity of knight-hood. Henry Bagenal then took over the command, but the campaign still dragged on uneventfully, and towards the end of December the English force moved to Glenarm, where Donald Gorm (James McDonnell's son) was beginning to be too self-assertive for the taste and dignity of the Government. Here Bagenal met with an unfortunate reverse, for Donald Gorm made a surprise attack upon his camp one night, and not only carried off the bulk of his horses, but killed and wounded an inconvenient number of officers and men;|| in fact, we learn that Sir William Stanley, and every English officer

* Bagenal to Perrot, Nov. 16th, 1584.

† Lords Justices to Walsingham, March 26th, 1585.

‡ Perrot to Privy Council, Oct. 1584.

§ Cal. State Papers, Oct. 25th, 1584.

|| Bagenal to Deputy, Jan. 7th, 1585. Sir William Stanley to Bagenal, Jan. 5th, 1585.

accompanying the force, was wounded, with the solitary exception of Bagenal himself, who only escaped unhurt by a precipitate and—according to Captain Lee—a premature flight, as to which many scathing comments were subsequently made.* Henry Bagenal was by no means the soldier in the field that his father had been, and on several subsequent occasions proved himself a man of very moderate valour.

In March of the following year (1585) the deferred Rathlin Island Expedition was launched. Captain Thornton succeeded in capturing a Scotch galley, and in this the English force was taken across in relays. To make up the necessary numbers, contingents were supplied from all the forts in the district, as it was felt that the occasion called for a special effort if the prestige of the Government was to be restored. Sir Henry Bagenal, Sir William Stanley, Captain Berkeley, Captain Henshaw, Arthur Savage and young Ralph Bagenal were all of the party. This time the course of events ran smoother. A landing was effected without opposition, and the Castle was found to be unoccupied; but at the northern end of the island the Scots were found in some force, and at that point some spirited fighting took place, in which both Sorley Boy and Donald Gorm took part. Sir William Stanley was again wounded, and young Ralph Bagenal, we are told, did much to retrieve the tarnished reputation of his family by fighting very valiantly. The Scots, who naturally had been expecting the attack, had a number of galleys in readiness at the north end of the island, and in these they were able to effect their escape to Cantyre, when the pressure of the English became too severe. The women and children had already been sent across to Scotland.

So once more Rathlin Island passed out of the keeping of Sorley Boy. Captain Henshaw, with a small garrison, was left on the island, with Arthur Savage as his lieutenant. We are told that they had little joy of their commission, the island being very bleak and barren, covered with rock and heather, and with no trees to form a shelter from the north winds.

Perrot was highly delighted with the capture of Rathlin Island, and wrote with pride to the Council in England that Sorley Boy, his son Alexander, and all his nephews had fled to Scotland; that the Route was utterly wasted and Ulster

* Capt. Lee to Walsingham, Feb. 2nd, 1585.

finally cleared of Scots. In the meanwhile, Angus, the eldest son of the late James McDonnell and Lady Agnes, was with his mother at the Court of James VI., trying to induce the young Scottish King to intercede with Elizabeth to obtain for him a grant of the Glynns. This was a matter over which Angus and Sorley Boy had recently fallen out very seriously, as each had set his heart on the possession of this coveted corner of Antrim. The moment Sorley Boy had been driven out of Rathlin Island he assumed the position of a humble suppliant for pardon, coupling his submission with the promise of eternal loyalty to the Queen if he might only be given a grant of the Glynns. Angus put in a very similar petition, outbidding his uncle, however, by adding to his own promise of loyalty an undertaking that, if he were given the grant, he would keep all other Scots out of Ulster, including Sorley Boy. There is no evidence that this undertaking was taken seriously or had an appreciable effect on the final result. That which ultimately decided Elizabeth in favour of the younger man was her firm adherence to the principle of primogeniture, which clearly marked Angus out as the rightful heir to his father's estates.

Sorley Boy was by now over eighty years of age, but still full of energy and vigour, and he had no idea of sitting tamely down and seeing himself dispossessed by his nephew in his old age. He slipped across from Cantyre to Rathlin Island in a small boat, and bribed one of Captain Henshaw's soldiers to get a letter which he had written conveyed to Perrot in Dublin.* This the soldier agreed to do, and faithfully carried out his undertaking. The letter merely contained a renewal of his humble protestations of loyalty, and the prayer that he might be allowed to die in his beloved Glynns. "It is called the Glynns," said Perrot, in writing to the Privy Council, "because it is full of rocky woods and glades, and it is backed by a very steep and boggy mountain" [Knocklayd]. "It lies opposite to Cantyre, in Scotland." As a matter of fact, the Glynns, as ultimately defined, stretched the whole way from Ballycastle to Glenarm, but the Glynns proper, to which Perrot refers, and to which Sorley Boy was the more devotedly attached, were the present town-lands of Rathmoan and Culfeightrim.

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 118-78-1.

In May, 1586, all poor Sorley Boy's hopes, as far as the Glynns were concerned, were dashed to the ground, for Angus, on the recommendation of the Queen,* was given a formal grant of the seven baronies of the Glynns, the southern boundary of which was now definitely determined as excluding Larne and Olderfleet Castle, the two latter places being reckoned too near Carriekfergus for safety.†

It was very soon proved that Angus's promise to keep all other Scots out of Ulster was a vain undertaking, for he had barely been established in the Glynns before Sorley Boy's fourth son, Alexander—as a protest against the Government's rejection of his father's suit—returned his official pardon and landed in the Route with 400 men. Here he was joined by Neil McHugh (who apparently bore Sorley Boy's family no ill-will for having killed his father, Hugh McPhelim) and by Con McNeil Oge's son. Dunluce Castle was quickly retaken, with the help of some Irish within the walls, who let down withy ropes, by which the walls were sealed. Poor Peter Carey, the Constable, now paid the penalty for neglecting the warning given him, for he was hanged over the battlements of the Castle at the end of one of the very withies up which his captors had climbed.‡ The allied forces then crossed the Bann into the O'Cahan country, and there completely overpowered the feeble garrison which had been left in Coleraine. All Perrot's laborious work was now undone, but the victorious career of the invading Scots was very near its close. Flushed with their success in the Route and O'Cahan's country, they ventured to cross the Foyle into Inishowen. Here, however, they were brought up short by an unexpected encounter with a combined English and Irish army, under Captain Merriman and Hugh Gallagher, which barred their further progress at the neck of the Inishowen peninsula, near Colmackatreynne (Newtownunningham).

Merriman, who was sheriff of Donegal at the time, had 160 English with him, while Gallagher was in command of his own and Tirlough Luineach's forces. The Scots were therefore very greatly outnumbered, and Alexander, recog-

* Queen to Council, Feb. 26th, 1586.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 124-29.

‡ Wallop to Walsingham, Nov. 18th, 1585. Hill's "McDonnells of Antrim." Bagenal to Grey, Nov. 1585.

nizing this, offered to fight Captain Merriman a duel between the two armies, on the understanding that, if he prevailed, the Scots should be allowed to go on their way into Donegal unmolested. Merriman accepted the challenge, and, in the duel which followed, wounded Alexander so severely in the thigh that he was forced to retire into the ranks of his followers.* A general battle ensued in which the Scots were worsted, and twelve or thirteen of their number were killed. Alexander, though severely wounded, managed to swim across to the island of Inch, where he simulated death, and was laid in a grave covered with rushes and surrounded by "keening" women.† Hugh Gallagher, however, got news of the ruse adopted, and, following Alexander across to the island, he quickly turned the sham grave into a real one, and sent the Scot's head to Dublin, where it was exposed, according to custom, on the spikes over the Castle gates. Con McNeil Oge's son was also killed.‡

* "Hibernia Anglicana."

† Sir R. Bingham to Burleigh, Dec. 12th, 1586. Four Masters.

‡ Cal. State Papers, Vol. 107-35.

CHAPTER X

Indignation of the Queen at the barren results of Perrot's expedition—Reconciliation with Sorley Boy—He comes to Dublin and is given a grant of the Route—McQuillin's counter-claims—Death of Sorley Boy—His character.

THE marked disproportion between the sums spent in Ulster by Perrot and the results achieved, called forth some highly sarcastic comments from the Queen. She wrote him a sharp note, in her own handwriting, in which she acidly counselled him to be more sure of his information in the future, before he wasted her money in such profitless undertakings as his late journey to Ulster had proved.* She pointed out with acerbity that he had spent much treasure and accomplished nothing that was of the slightest value. "Let us have no more such rash, unadvised journeys without good ground," she concluded, "as your last fond journey to the north." Perrot was much upset. He began to realize for the first time that the Queen's temper in the matter of the Scots had undergone a change, and, adapting his own policy to her new mood, he sent Sorley Boy a friendly invitation to come to Dublin and talk things over quietly. At first the old man was none too eager, being slightly distrustful of the Deputy's intentions, but he was finally won over by Captain William Warren, whose father had been fast friends with Sorley Boy's father in old days. So, in early June, 1586,† Sorley Boy came to Dublin, marching through the Castle gates under the gory head of his son Alexander. He came on his knees into the presence of the Deputy, and, prostrating himself humbly before a picture of Elizabeth, reverently kissed the (painted) hem of her garment.‡ He swore from thence-

* Queen to Perrot, April 14th, 1586. The reference to his imperfect information was in connection with the fabulous reports as to the numbers of the Scots who had landed in Fanad in Aug. 1584.

† Fenton to Burleigh, June 14th, 1586.

‡ Cal. State Papers, Vol. 139-7.

forward to be a good subject to the Queen, and, in return for these loyal protestations, and as a sign of their acceptance as genuine, he was presented by Perrot with a costly mantle of velvet and gold.

Sorley Boy was furthermore appointed Constable of Dunluce Castle, with rights over all the Route, from the Bush to the Bann, including the town-lands of Loughgill, Ballymonin and Dunseverick. McQuillin, who arrived in Dublin on the heels of Sorley Boy and on the same errand, was at the same time granted the four town-lands of Kileonmoray, Kilmoray, Killaquin and Clashnaganagh,* an arrangement which left him very dissatisfied indeed, for he complained that Sorley Boy's lands were by far the richer of the two, which was probably correct. The Friary at Coleraine and the Bann fishing were excluded from any rights granted, being reserved for the use of Her Majesty. Sorley Boy left his son Angus (or Ness, as he was more commonly called) in the hands of Sir Henry Wallop, the Treasurer, as a pledge of his fulfilment of the conditions imposed, which included an undertaking that he would not import, for purposes of war or agriculture, more than 200 men from Scotland.

This episode marks the close of the long conflict between Elizabeth and the Ulster McDonnells. Both Angus and Sorley Boy lived up to their promises, and, the moment they were left alone, became loyal and peaceable subjects of the Queen, Angus, in fact, proving the only loyal chief in Ulster throughout the protracted course of Tyrone's rebellion. Sorley Boy by that time was dead, and his sons, who were Shane O'Neil's nephews on the mother's side, proved less faithful than their father, and inferior personalities in other respects.

Sorley Boy died in January, 1590, at the age of eighty-five, having survived his wife eight years. Although his grant was bounded by the rivers Bush and Bann, and although Angus had been nominated lord of the Glynns, there is reason to suppose that some composition was arrived at between uncle and nephew; for it is satisfactory to be able to record that Sorley Boy died in his favourite Castle of Donananie, which was certainly not within the limits of his own grant. Of his real character little is known, and he may have been full of the many faults of his kind and of his day, but he is

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 124-85.

certainly the most picturesque figure in sixteenth-century Ulster. There is something which stirs sympathy in the thought of the old man, with his long yellow locks turned white, being relentlessly pursued by one Deputy after another, and yet never crushed, never seeking favour by means of false protestations after the manner of his kind, and finally enjoying, for the last four years of his life, the lands for which he had fought for half a century.

With the death of Sorley Boy, all the old McDonnell names disappear permanently from Ulster history. Angus, in spite of the success of his application for the Glynns, continued to live in Cantyre with the remnant of his sons, his Ulster estate being managed by an agent named Randall McNess. The only representatives of the clan who stayed in the country were Sorley Boy's three sons, James, Randall and Angus,* of whom the first two occupied Dunluce Castle, while the third was for the time being a hostage in Dublin.

* A much younger illegitimate son of Sorley Boy named Loder, or Lother, also remained in Ulster. He was implicated in Rory O'Cahan's attempted rebellion in 1615.

CHAPTER XI

Perrot's partition of Ulster.

BY far the most important of Perrot's administrative acts was his division of Ulster into counties in 1586. The new counties numbered nine, and were as follows : Cavan, Fermanagh and Monaghan ; Armagh, Down and Antrim ; Donegal, Tyrone and Coleraine.

Cavan had been the country of that exemplary subject, Sir Hugh O'Reilly. The old man died in 1583, and his son Shane (or John), who succeeded, spoke English as well as his father, and was reputed as good a man in other ways. His good conduct, however—as will presently be seen—was not long proof against Tyrone's insidious counsels.

Monaghan and Fermanagh were respectively the countries of Sir Ross McMahon and Sir Cuconnaught Maguire, both of whom, under the new management, remained urraghs (or tributary vassals) of O'Neil. These three counties had, for many years, formed the most peaceable group in Ulster, but were soon destined to be converted, by the dealings of one Government official, into the cradle of the great rebellion which disturbed the last ten years of Elizabeth's reign.

The next natural group of three comprised Donegal, Tyrone and Coleraine. Donegal—which was the old Tyreconnell—was O'Donnell's country, with O'Boyle, O'Gallagher and the three McSweeneys, his acknowledged urraghs. O'Dogherty's position in Inishowen was less clearly defined, as his lands were systematically claimed by both O'Neil and O'Donnell, and between the two of them he generally managed to keep his independence. His two main strongholds were Derry and Ellaugh Castle.

The county of Coleraine, locally known as the Kryne, was the O'Cahan's country, whose headquarters were at Limavady. He, too, was an urragh of O'Neil.

The county of Tyrone was divided by Perrot between Tirlough Luineach and Dungannon, whom we may now call the Earl of Tyrone, that title having been definitely conferred on him by the Parliament of 1585. The conditions of this curious arrangement were that Tyrone should lease from Tirlough Luineach, for a period of seven years from the date of the agreement, the south-eastern half of the O'Neil territory, *i.e.*, everything lying to the south-east of the mountain of Mullaghearn, for an annual rent of a thousand marks. The lands of which Tyrone became in this way the absolute lord—for he never paid a penny of his rent during the whole seven years—were Glenconkein and Killetagh, and all Tyrone proper east of the line running from the mountain of Mullaghearn to the Blackwater, the Trough in County Monaghan, and Clan Brassil in County Armagh. The period of the so-called lease was fixed at seven years, because it was deemed a certainty by all parties—except Tirlough himself—that by that time the O'Neil would be dead.

The practical effect of this most foolish and unjust measure of Perrot's was that the newly-created Earl of Tyrone, in the full sunshine of the Government favour, became a richer and more powerful chief than the reigning O'Neil. His chief Castle was at Dungannon, for Shane's old house at Benburb had never been repaired since Sidney had burned it, and was in ruins, but he had subsidiary residences at Castle Roe on the Bann and at Ballynascannon. Tirlough Luineach was limited to his two Castles of Strabane and Dunalong.

A curious condition of the arrangement made between Perrot and Tirlough Luineach was that the latter was to dismiss his Scotch army and maintain in its place a standing force of 300 English soldiers, O'Donnell being bound under the same agreement to maintain 200. The late Marshal, Sir Nicholas Bagenal, who was now a very old man and a permanent resident in Dublin, warned Perrot against this scheme, which he predicted was foredoomed to failure; as either the English would degenerate and adopt native habits, or else they would be gradually made away with by a population which viewed their establishment in their midst with a suspicious and unfriendly eye. The religious question was beginning to make itself very strongly felt in Ulster, and—though kept to a certain extent below the surface—was in a sense the dominating

factor in all the Elizabethan rebellions. The periodical invasions of the Roman Catholic Scots from the Western Highlands aroused neither resentment nor uneasiness among the natives, but there was a very different feeling abroad when the invaders were English Protestants. Bagenal predicted a short and troubled existence for Perrot's resident soldiers, and he was right. In Donegal the problem did not arise, for O'Donnell made no attempt to live up to his agreement, and later on—by way of a composition—proposed a payment of 450 beeves, which, needless to say, were never produced.

Tirlough Luineach, however, faithfully took on his quota of 300, and kept them as long as they would stay. This, as events proved, was about six months, for the Marshal's prophecy turned out unhappily true. Stragglers from the camp did not return, and the 300 gradually dwindled, till the survivors determined that life would be safer in the Pale, and made their way back there in a body. In the case of the Earl, Perrot made no stipulation as to the maintenance of English soldiers, for Tyrone was at the moment the spoilt darling of the Government and superior to such arrangements, but he planted upon him the two English brothers, Richard and Henry Ovington (corrupted into Hoveden), whose intended mission was a continuance of his English education, but whose ultimate influence on the Earl was of a widely different character. Two hundred acres round the Blackwater fort were reserved for the Crown, and on this land Captain Keyes, the Constable, set to work building, and soon had rough quarters erected, capable of accommodating 400 soldiers.

In Armagh, Tirlough Braselagh had Clanbrassil in the north, Tirlough McHenry had the Fews in the south, and O'Hanlon ruled rather unsteadily over the centre.

The ownership of Down was a far more complicated affair. Down was subdivided into South Clondeboye, Kilwarlin, the Dufferin, McCartan's country, the Ards, Iveagh (Magennis' country), Lecale and Mourne.

As may readily be understood, the limits of real estate in Ireland were never very clearly defined, except in cases where some natural boundary, such as a river, separated the property of two neighbours. In County Down this vagueness of boundaries was especially noticeable. Magennis' country and

McCartan's country were elastic terms, the meaning of which varied with the predatory capacity of each successive owner. McCartan's country technically embraced the Dufferin, but, at the time of Perrot's distribution scheme, McCartan had little strength of following, and the country that carried his name was, to a great extent, in the hands of others. The Dufferin, which had once been the property of the Mandevilles, was at the time of Perrot's partition farmed by Randall Brereton,* but before the end of the century it had passed into the hands of Sir Nicholas Whyte's family. It is described as a small country in extent, but densely clothed with impenetrable woods, which made it the chosen home of brigands and loose men. To the north of it was South Clandeboye, to the west of it Kilwarlin with Killultagh beyond, and to the north east of it McCartan's country and the Ards. To the south-west lay Magennis' country, to the south-east Lecale, and beyond that again Mourne. Lecale, at the end of the sixteenth century, was a treeless district, which nominally belonged to the Countess of Kildare, having been granted to her father-in-law by Queen Mary.† Its freedom from woods made it one of the safest countries in Ulster, and in Perrot's day there was still the remains there of a small colony of English, who had been brought over in old days by Sir John Cowsie, viz., Savages, Russells, Jordans, Audleys, Bentleys and Fitzsimmons, "who still remain, though somewhat in poor estate."‡

Mourne was mainly farmed by the Bagenals. Little Ards was the property of Arthur Savage, who rented it to Captain Piers the younger, *i.e.*, the nephew of the old Carrickfergus Constable. Great Ards was part of the property of Con McNeil Oge, whose estates also included South Clandeboye, Kilwarlin and Killultagh. This impulsive and unreliable chief had succeeded his brother Hugh when the latter had been killed by the Scots in 1555. He had been a prisoner in Dublin Castle at the time of Smith's and Essex's invasions, and, indeed, the knowledge of this fact had, to a large extent, been responsible for the promotion of the whole enterprise, for the lands of Con McNeil Oge were those principally affected. During Con's imprisonment Sir Brian McPhelim and Brian Feartagh ¶ exercised a divided lordship over his territories, and both

* Carew MSS., 1594-139. † Carew MSS., Oct. 1586. ‡ *Ibid.*

were accused of having had a hand in the murder of young Tom Smith.

Essex's plans would probably have matured far more satisfactorily for himself if it had not been for the persistent and malicious hostility of Fitzwilliam. This self-seeking Deputy had been from the first a bitter opponent of Essex's venture, which he foresaw would result in a diminution of his secret profits. He accordingly—out of pure spite, and in the hope that it would add to Essex's embarrassments—arranged for the escape of Con McNeil Oge, who—once free—lost no time in returning to his native haunts, which he reached shortly before the execution of Sir Brian. The moment that chieftain was dead, Con reasserted his rights to the lands he had enjoyed before his imprisonment, and proved no less truculent and obstructive than had his predecessor. Con McNeil Oge was generally reckoned a dangerous character, and probably with justice; at any rate, we may be quite sure that Fitzwilliam was not entirely ignorant of the reputation enjoyed by the man whom he had so maliciously loosed on his supposed colleague. But though Con's sudden reappearance may have contributed to Essex's embarrassments, and may even have hastened his final abandonment of the whole enterprise, it does not appear that—beyond the Carrickfergus exploit already referred to—Con was particularly aggressive. Four years later, however, his hostility to foreigners became much more marked, for information came to Tirlough Luineach that Con had formed a plot to massacre all the English in Lecale, Dufferin and the Ards in one day.* This plot Tirlough Luineach communicated to Drury, and as a consequence Con was outlawed and a price put upon his head, but his capture was not effected until a year later, when he was taken by Brian Feartagh, the rival claimant to his estates, and handed over to Captain Piers at Carrickfergus. For five years Con lay in Dublin Castle, but Perrot, in pursuance of his anti-Scotch policy, then liberated him, no doubt for a suitable consideration. He died in 1589, almost at the same time as his old enemy, Sorley Boy. Upon his death his estates were settled upon Neil McBrian Feartagh, the son of the man who had betrayed him. Neil proved on the whole a loyal subject, and, on his death, his lands passed to his son Con McNeil. This

* Tirlough Luineach to Drury, Sept. 1579.

son was popularly—but quite improperly—known as Con McNeil Oge, a circumstance which is apt to give rise to confusion as between the original Con McNeil Oge, who died in 1589, and the man who, in 1603, laid the foundation-stone of the great Ulster Plantation by disposing of the bulk of his enormous property to two Scotchmen named James Hamilton and Hugh Montgomery.

Antrim contained the Route, McQuillin's country, or the Moyan, as it was called, the Glynns, North Clandeboye, Carrickfergus and Magee Island. North Clandeboye had originally been divided between Hugh and Brian, the two sons of Phelim Bacagh, Hugh having the north half and Brian the south, with the River Kellis acting as the boundary between the two.* Upon the death of these brothers, their lands, in the natural course, descended to their sons, Hugh McHugh and Shane McBrian, of whom the last-named was illegitimate,† “whereby there do be great wars between them.” In 1586, Shane simplified the situation to a certain extent by killing Hugh, but even then he had the younger brother Neil to deal with, and the two kept up a ceaseless feud till 1589, when Fitzwilliam—for reasons of his own—took sides very definitely with Shane McBrian, and clapped Neil McHugh into Dublin Castle. This left Shane for the time being the undisputed lord of all North Clandeboye, till the inevitable moment when Neil, thirsting for revenge, bought his way out of Dublin Castle, and at once took up the old fight with his cousin. The feud continued with fluctuating results up till the end of the century. Each of the competitors, in turn, wooed and won the support of the Government by ceaselessly accusing the other of every conceivable villainy; and each, when placed in the position of responsibility, infallibly proved worthy of his own description.

* Hill's “McDonnells of Antrim.”

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 202, Part II.-54.

CHAPTER XII

Quarrel between Loftus and Perrot—Its causes—Dublin University endowment—Perrot's unfortunate remark about the Queen—Frivolity of the other charges levelled against him—His recall and disgrace—Affection of the Irish chiefs for Perrot—Prosperity of Ireland—Fitzwilliam returns as Deputy—His alleged corruption—His expedition to the north—Rumours of Spaniards at large—Fitzwilliam's real motive—O'Toole and O'Dogherty—Their arrest and imprisonment—Suspicious conduct of Fitzwilliam—He visits Tirlough Luineach at Lifford—Friendliness of the O'Neil—His high regard for Perrot—His appreciation of Perrot's gift—Tirlough Luineach petitions to be created Earl of Omagh—His claim for rent against Tyrone—Fitzwilliam visits Tyrone at Dungannon—His handsome entertainment.

CREATIVE reform is very rarely popular even with those whom it is designed to benefit, nor was Perrot's redistribution scheme any exception to the general rule. The majority of those affected were openly antagonistic, and even the palpable gainers grumbled at not gaining more. Far ahead of all other gainers was the Earl of Tyrone, who, from being a landless pensioner on charity, became, by the stroke of a pen, the lord of half Ulster. From this sudden access of greatness Tyrone never recovered. From the moment that he was created a territorial magnate with a revenue independent of the English Treasury, he became a rebel in the bud, scheming without intermission to overthrow the power which had made him. Loftus, who cared little for the interests of anyone except himself, but who suffered from an unquenchable hatred of Perrot, wrote to Burleigh protesting that the new arrangement gave Tyrone all the urraghs from the foot of Slieve Gallion to the Pale, which, in point of fact, it did.

Perrot and Loftus hated one another very earnestly. For this mutual antipathy there were various reasons, some substantial, and others merely childish. Among other things, Loftus had manœuvred the escape of Sir John O'Dogherty out of Dublin Castle, in consideration of a consignment of several hogsheads of Lough Foyle salmon.* Perrot, who not unnaturally held the view that if anyone was to get salmon for arranging

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 150-52-2.

O'Dogherty's escape it should be himself, had a heated interview with the Chancellor over the matter, and blows were very nearly exchanged. Loftus never forgave Perrot for finding him out, and thenceforward systematically opposed every proposition that the Deputy put before the Council. On one occasion his demeanour was so offensive that Perrot struck him in the face. Poor Perrot, who suffered severely from stone and was in constant pain, had not the sweetest of tempers, and on another occasion actually knocked the old Marshal, Sir Nicholas Bagenal, down during a heated altercation.* Methods of argument such as these were naturally unpopular, and Perrot managed to make a number of enemies, who, in the end, compassed his ruin.

The climax of the feud between the Deputy and the Chancellor came about over the question of the Dublin University endowment. This was a pet scheme of Perrot's, and one which was intrinsically worthy. The trouble arose over the fact that the scheme involved the appropriation of some of the revenues of St. Patrick's church for the purpose of endowing the University, and Loftus, who was Archbishop as well as Chancellor, opposed this encroachment upon his special preserves with a heat and bitterness worthy of the Deputy himself. Unfortunately for Perrot and the success of his scheme, Loftus happened to be a great personal friend of Burleigh, and he prevailed upon the Lord Treasurer to get the Queen to put her veto on the proposed transaction. When the irascible Deputy learnt of this checkmate to his long-cherished scheme, he let fall a hasty remark about Her Majesty's sacred person which was certainly not pretty,† and which Loftus took good care should find its way back to the ears of Elizabeth. From that moment Perrot's doom was sealed. Elizabeth never forgave a personal slight. She had too much vanity to let an affront to her person be put forward as the main charge against one of her Ministers, but there can be no doubt that this unfortunate remark, and nothing else, brought about Perrot's downfall.‡ He was recalled in

* Carew MSS. Bagenal to Leicester, May, 1587. Cal. State Papers, Vol. 129-84 and 93.

† "Hibernia Anglicana." See also Cal. State Papers, Vol. 161-19. The man who actually laid the information as to Perrot's unfortunate speech was his secretary, Philip Williams.

‡ Perrot's downfall was to a great extent assisted by the bitter hostility of Sir Christopher Hatton, at the time in high favour with the Queen. See Harleian Miscellany II., p. 96.

disgrace, and, on arrival in London in June, 1588, was lodged in the Tower on charges which were so ludicrously insufficient in themselves that in some cases they fell little short of testimonials of efficiency, but behind which was the outraged dignity of the offended Queen. The formal indictment was: "that he was severe and forced the people to the oath of allegiance, and pryed into men's patents, and endeavoured to promote laws against recusants, and to repeal Poynings' Act; and this impeachment was abetted by the Chancellor (being also Archbishop), whom the Deputy had disoblged by endeavouring to appropriate the revenues of St. Patrick's church to the new University, and by carrying himself too magisterially in the Government. With the Chancellor, Sir Henry Bagenal, Sir Geoffrey Fenton and others of the Council sided, so that it grew into a powerful faction by which the Deputy was often thwarted at Council Boards or elsewhere."*

Unpopular though Perrot may have been with the greedy and corrupt members of his Council, he was astonishingly popular with the Irish chiefs, who flocked to the quay from all parts of Ulster to bid him God-speed. There were congregated Tirlough Luineach, Tyrone, O'Donnell (apparently bearing no ill-will for the kidnapping of his son Hugh Roe), Sir John O'Dogherty, Manus O'Donnell, Egnéchan O'Donnell, Con McNeil Oge, Sir Ross McMahon, Sir Cuconnaught Maguire, Sir Hugh Magennis and Sir Oghie O'Hanlon,† The friendliness of the Irish chiefs was afterwards brought up as evidence of Perrot's corrupt relations with them, and there is every probability that he did accept bribes; but, having been bribed, he at all events kept faith with those who had bribed him, which is more than can be said of his successor.

In addition to his subdivision of Ulster, Perrot introduced and passed Acts prohibiting the manufacture of *aqua vitæ* (whisky), "which sets the Irishry amadding and breeds many mischiefs," and for the reinforcement of Statute 28 Henry VIII., which forbade marriages with natives. He also attempted, but failed, to get Poynings' Act (Henry VII.) repealed, which laid down that every Act passed by the Irish Parliament had to be confirmed in England before it became law. All these acts stand to his credit, though the last-named was construed into an offence against the State.

* "Hibernia Anglicana."

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 144-7.

On the whole, Perrot—who was commonly supposed to be a son of Henry VIII.—may be ranked with the very small number of Elizabeth's representatives in Ireland whose records are creditable rather than otherwise. His unpopularity with the Dublin officials is all in his favour. Public morality at the time of his administration had sunk so low that there could be no higher tribute to a Deputy's integrity than the disfavour of his colleagues on the Council. Perrot died in the Tower before the absurd charges on which he was put there could be either proved or disproved. He had left a name in Ireland which, at all events, was respected and admired by the native chiefs, and he left the country itself in a state of unprecedented prosperity. "This realm," says a report on the state of Ireland at the close of Perrot's administration, "is now in better estate than ever I did know it, being not only peaceable and quiet in every part thereof, but so plentiful in all kinds of provisions that corn is little worth and beef sold at 3 lbs. for a white groat."*

We may now take leave of the unfortunate Sir John Perrot and devote our attention to a very much worse man. Perrot may have been corrupt, but he was at all events faithful to those who corrupted him. Sir William Fitzwilliam, his successor, was false both to the Queen who paid him and to the chiefs who bribed him. Much of the unrest, which culminated in Tyrone's rebellion, had its source in the malpractices of this very venal Deputy. Perrot publicly accused him of having made £10,000 out of his previous term of office.† According to one Johnson, an attorney of the Queen's Bench in Ireland, he had paid £1,000 to someone unknown—presumably Burleigh—for the privilege of going back for the second time to Ireland as Deputy,‡ which, if true, was a sufficient indication of his intentions. His first official act showed a disposition to lose no time in getting back his entrance fee, if such, indeed, had been paid. He organized an expedition in force to the north in November, 1588, *i.e.*, very soon after his arrival, which was wholly unjustified by the tranquil condition of the country as left by Perrot.

Fitzwilliam was at the time sixty-four years of age, and—by his own account—so unwieldy of body that he could barely

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 207, Part VI.—126.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 144-7.

‡ Cal. State Papers, Vol. 197-60,

stand. Still, he had reasons of his own for being active, though these reasons were by no means those which were furnished to the Queen. The official excuses for an expedition, which was as costly as it was barren of results, were: (1) To persuade O'Donnell to pay his arrears of rent now (including the 400 beeves he had agreed with Perrot to pay in commutation of his failure to maintain his 200 English soldiers) amounting to 2,000 beeves. (2) To settle the land dispute between Tirlough Luineach and Tyrone. Fitzwilliam put forward the further pretext that he was called upon in his capacity as Deputy to destroy certain loose bands of Spaniards, survivors of the Armada, who were patrolling the country and creating a danger to the State.*

It must be admitted in Fitzwilliam's defence that wild rumours to this effect were in truth being freely circulated at the moment. Thousands of Spaniards were reported to have landed, and to be overawing the country in McSweeney Dogh's district. These thousands eventually resolved themselves into a handful of half-drowned mariners, whom the brothers Hoveden captured and sent up to Dublin. As a matter of fact, all the Spaniards who managed to reach shore from the wrecked Armada were either summarily "executed" by the Government authorities, or else killed by the country people. A man named McLoughlin McCabe boasted that he himself had killed eighty with his axe as they struggled up one after another out of the sea.†

In point of fact, derelict Spaniards were not Fitzwilliam's quest, nor did he find any such with the exception of two Spanish and five Dutch boys whom he loyally caused to be executed.‡ The discreditable truth was that he had been led to believe that fabulous treasure in gold and silver had been secured out of the wrecked ships by the Irish, and secreted in various safe hiding-places;§ and his hurry to get to Donegal arose from his anxiety to get this treasure into his hands before those who had the secret of its whereabouts had time to dissipate it.|| He was

* Fitzwilliam to Walsingham, Oct. 28th, 1588.

† Edward Whyte to Stephen Whyte, Sept. 12th, 1588. Carew MSS.

‡ Bingham to Queen, Dec. 3rd, 1588.

§ Capt. Dalway to Carew, July 27th, 1589. Bingham to Fitzwilliam, Sept. 21st, 1589.

|| Fynes Moryson.

accompanied on this piratical expedition by Sir Ralph Bingham, Sir Lucas Dillon, Sir George Bouchier, Sir Thomas Le Strange and Sir Geoffrey Fenton. A strong fighting force was also in attendance, to add weight to any arguments he might have to put forward in support of his prescriptive right to the treasure.

The covetous Deputy first of all made a short tour of the Connaught coast, but, finding nothing there but wreckage, crossed into Donegal by way of Ballyshannon. At Ballyshannon he sent one John Bermingham to Sir Owen O'Toole, the local magnate, with an invitation—almost amounting to an order—for his attendance under a safe conduct. Sir Owen dutifully obeyed the summons, and from that time on accompanied the expedition. At Donegal O'Donnell met the Deputy,* also in response to a summons, but he was old and feeble, and his further presence was not insisted on. From Donegal Fitzwilliam went north to McSweeney Dogh's country, lying to the west of Fanad, which was the country where the bulk of the fabled treasure was reported to have been landed. None, however, was discovered by the Viceregal party, and the disappointed expedition then moved down to Lifford, where Sir John O'Dogherty, of Inishowen, in obedience to a summons, also joined the party.

The limits of Donegal having now been reached and no treasure discovered, Fitzwilliam's mood underwent a marked change for the worse. The two unfortunate Donegal chiefs, who had come in under a safe conduct, were placed under arrest and from that time on accompanied the expedition as closely-guarded prisoners. O'Dogherty, it will be remembered, had very recently escaped from Dublin Castle with the paid assistance of the Archbishop. With regard to the other prisoner, Sir Owen O'Toole, a few words of explanation are necessary.

Sir Owen O'Toole was more correctly known as Sir John O'Gallagher. His real name was Sir Eoghan McTuahal O'Gallagher, which may be correctly anglicized into Sir Owen McToole, but by no means into Sir Owen O'Toole. However, it will be convenient to refer to him by the name by which he was generally known. At the time of Fitzwilliam's visit he was in receipt of a pension of £100 a year from the Government. He was a great favourite with Incenduv and a strong supporter of the Scotch faction in Donegal; in fact, he and Incenduv may

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 139-25.

be said to have run the Government of Donegal between them, O'Donnell himself being weak and silly. Owen O'Toole, by the way, had married the Earl of Tyrone's mother, Joan Maguire. She was a daughter of old Sir Cucconnaught and was also the mother of Cormac McBaron. Art McBaron was illegitimate. After the murder of Ferdoragh she had married Henry McPhelim Roe (O'Neil) and by him had Tirlough McHenry of the Fews. Then her second husband died and she married Owen O'Toole. She ultimately died herself in December, 1600.*

It was afterwards asserted—and possibly with truth—by Hugh Roe O'Donnell, that O'Dogherty and O'Toole had come in of their own accord to the Deputy, and willingly accompanied him as long as he was within the boundaries of Donegal; but that they had extracted from him a promise that he would not take them beyond the limits of their own country. No sooner, however, had Fitzwilliam got these two unfortunate men safely under guard, than he began to try and force from them the secret of the supposed hidden treasure. This they were naturally unable to give him, for the very good reason that the whole story was apocryphal. Fitzwilliam, however, obstinately refused to believe this, and, in direct violation of his pledge, carried both the men off to Dublin.† O'Dogherty—though he had no Spanish treasure to bribe with—had other resources, and after two years' confinement he bought his release, possibly with more Lough Foyle salmon. O'Toole presumably had nothing to bribe with, for he, poor man, was kept a prisoner for six years.‡ Russell, when he succeeded, released him out of pity, but he was then an old and broken man, and died shortly afterwards.

Fitzwilliam, who had always a plausible story ready for every occasion, wrote to Walsingham that the two chiefs had willingly consented to accompany him to Dublin, as pledges for the payment of 2,000 beeves, which were owing to Her Majesty by O'Donnell; but both Fynes Moryson and the Four Masters agree in ridiculing this story, and Hugh Roe O'Donnell's evidence before the Dundalk Commission in 1596 bears out their view, which was that both men were seized and imprisoned in violation of Fitzwilliam's pledged word.

With his two Donegal prisoners still under custody, Fitz-

* Four Masters.

† *Ibid.* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 207, Part VI.—126.

‡ Carew MSS. 1594-137.

william moved down to the River Mourne on a friendly visit to Tirlough Luineach. This easy-going and lethargic chieftain was at the time living in a new stone house—optimistically styled a Castle—built on the Lifford side of the river, which he had occupied since O'Donnell burned his Strabane Castle after the battle of Drumleen. The house had been originally built by Hugh Gallagher, in the days when he aspired to be the O'Donnell, and was shared between him and Tirlough Luineach till the death of the former in 1589. Here he now received the Deputy and staff with every demonstration of friendliness. The well-stocked cellar was liberally drawn upon, and, after the O'Neil had provided such entertainment as the place afforded, the two parted in apparent friendliness.

Tirlough Luineach's friendliness towards Fitzwilliam seems to have been genuine, and to have been honestly reciprocated by Fitzwilliam, but Perrot was the Deputy who was most deeply enshrined in the old O'Neil's heart. The late Deputy, shortly after Fitzwilliam's treasure-hunting visit, sent him a steel head-piece by the hand of one John Garland, who relates that Tirlough Luineach "took it in his hand and kissed it at least half a score times, and then presently he sent for two hogsheads [*sic*] of wine and christened your skull [head-piece], and after he had drunk his fill he put on his shirt of mail and his jaek, and called for a bowl of wine and drank it to your honour's health; and withal he put on the skull and drew out his sword with a great oath, and said that Sir John Perrot was the truest man of his word that ever he knew, and he would prove it upon any man that would say the contrary, old as he was, and then sat down and said, 'I am now ten years younger by reason of that skull.' "*

Apparently no one took up Tirlough Luineach's challenge, and the proceedings terminated peacefully. On the occasion of Fitzwilliam's visit, Tirlough Luineach was less combative and in all probability more business-like, for he had two definite petitions to lay before the Deputy. One of these was that he should be created Earl of Omagh,† and the other that pressure should be brought to bear on Tyrone to make him pay the rent owed for the lands he leased from Tirlough Luineach, as to which the lessee was now three years in arrear. Tirlough

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 146-40.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 129-59. See also Vol. 130-28.

Luineach pleaded that Tyrone should either be forced to pay or to give up the lands. Fitzwilliam was full of sympathy and of promises, but he was a man who did nothing for nothing, and—after parting with the O'Neil—he went on to Dungannon to see whether Tyrone could offer him substantial arguments against the justice of Tirlough Luineach's claim.

Tyrone was a finished courtier and a man of the world. Fynes Moryson describes him as “of a high dissembling subtlety and of a profound wit.” He moreover had the advantage of having been reared in two of the best houses in England, and he knew exactly how things should be done. Fitzwilliam, who was a lover of good things, wrote to Walsingham in high praise of the entertainment provided for them at Dungannon. Nothing was wanting, he said, and both food and wine were of the best.* The entire party left Dungannon fully convinced that Tyrone was one of the best of fellows, and the most loyal subject in Ulster. Sir Geoffrey Fenton and Sir Lucas Dillon were especially warm in his praise. Burleigh wrote to the latter asking for his candid opinion of a man who, even at this early stage, was beginning to be something of an enigma to statesmen in England. Dillon replied with enthusiasm that Tyrone was “greatly followed and valiant, and, by reason of his bringing up and training, of far better disposition, more tractable and politic than any of his ancestors.”

In all the circumstances it is not surprising that poor Tirlough Luineach's claims should have been rather neglected. The Deputy, it is true, wrote to him that Tyrone had agreed to pay up the 3,000 marks arrears of rent, and Tyrone himself subsequently claimed to have made such a payment, but there is no evidence to bear out this statement, and the events that shortly followed point very strongly in the opposite direction.

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 139-25.

CHAPTER XIII

Elizabeth's displeasure at Fitzwilliam's expedition—Hugh McShane arrives in Ulster from Scotland—His interview with Capt. Merriman—He goes up to Dublin and lays information against Tyrone—Scepticism of Fitzwilliam—Tyrone is sent for—His explanations and their acceptance—Hugh McShane's return to the north—His betrayal by Shane Maguire—Tyrone's conditions for his release—Execution of Hugh McShane—Tyrone is again sent for to Dublin—He is dismissed with a caution—Tirlough Luineach's indignation at Hugh's execution—He sends Con McShane to England—Con is waylaid and seized by Fitzwilliam—He is handed over to Tyrone—Tyrone's repudiation of his rent—His mean nature—His enormous income—Tyrone burns Dunalong—He attacks Strabane with a thousand men—His poor generalship—Timidity of Hugh Gallagher—Capt. Mostyn takes the lead—Defeat of Tyrone—His hurried flight.

IT is to be doubted whether Fitzwilliam returned from his northern tour thoroughly satisfied with its results, for none of the Armada treasure had so far materialized ; and, though he had doubtless made some satisfactory arrangement with Tyrone over the matter of Tirlough Luineach's claim for rent, this can have been but a very poor substitute for the other. The Queen—as may easily be imagined—was very far from pleased, for the expedition had cost her a great deal of money and had accomplished nothing of any material value to her revenue or interests generally. While she was still in this very dissatisfied mood, an incident occurred which seemed to shake to their very foundations all the glowing reports forwarded by Fitzwilliam and Dillon as to the Earl's civilized and tractable nature.

It will be remembered that, in August, 1584, Hugh and Art McShane had landed in Lough Swilly with a party of Macleans, who—after a certain amount of local filibustering—had embarked for Scotland on the approach of two of Her Majesty's ships. Hugh and Art, however, had remained behind, and a year later Perrot had succeeded in capturing Art,* who was safely lodged in Dublin Castle. Hugh, who had no wish to join his two brothers in the Castle, and who was fully alive to Perrot's

* Cal. State Papers, 126-43. Perrot to Walsingham, Feb. 26th, 1586.

hostile attitude towards the Scots, upon learning of this catastrophe, went back to Scotland. Here he stayed during the remainder of Perrot's administration, completing arrangements for bringing over an army, when opportunity might offer, to co-operate with Tirlough Luineach. Perrot, who was perfectly well aware of his intentions, sent him an ultimatum to the effect that, if he brought over any such army during his administration, it would be interpreted as an act of hostility on the part of Tirlough Luineach, and this ultimatum Hugh had respected. Perrot, however, had now gone back in disgrace to England, and a man who viewed all political matters with very different eyes was in his place.

On learning of the change of Deputies, Hugh McShane's ambitious schemes once more revived, and in February, 1589, he landed in Lough Swilly, not with the army of 2,000 that he was reputed to have raised, but merely for purposes of preliminary consultation with Tirlough Luineach. This chief had in 1584—in reluctant response to pressure from Perrot—once more nominated Tyrone as his tanist, but this forced arrangement had not survived Tyrone's repudiation of the head-rent he owed the O'Neil for occupying and rack-renting the best half of his territory. The breach between the two branches of the O'Neil family was, in fact, wider now than ever, and, when Tyrone made it quite clear that his intention was absolutely to repudiate the arrangement for rent which he himself had proposed, Tirlough Luineach, for the second time, disinherited him and substituted in his place one of the sons of Shane. This time the son selected was Hugh, possibly the most efficient and eligible of the family in all respects.

Hugh's first act after landing was to interview Captain Merriman, the Sheriff of the County. Merriman was very favourably impressed, both by the personality of the young man, and by the good and loyal intentions that he professed. As a result of the interview, he wrote to the Deputy that Hugh had some startling revelations to communicate to his secret ear, if he might be guaranteed a safe conduct to Dublin. Fitzwilliam, who scented intrigue and opportunities for personal plunder, was interested and gave the required guarantee, and Hugh went up to Dublin. His information was to the effect that Tyrone had for some time past been in constant communication with both Rome and Spain, with a view to organizing a comprehensive

rebellion on religious lines in which the whole of Ulster, if not the whole of Ireland, was to take part.

It was, of course, sufficiently obvious to Fitzwilliam—as it is to us to-day—that Hugh's disclosures were not actuated by love of the Queen, or loyalty to the Government, but by the simple desire to discredit Tyrone, and to divert the support of the Government from the Earl to himself. In Fitzwilliam's eyes the point of main importance was that Tyrone was the man in possession, or at any rate in half-possession, and that Tyrone was therefore the man who could afford to pay in order to remain in possession. He accordingly threw ridicule on Hugh's story, which he denounced as a spiteful attempt to malign the good Earl.* However, for the sake of appearances, the latter was summoned up to Dublin to make his explanations, which, it is scarcely necessary to say, he succeeded in doing to the complete satisfaction of the Deputy. He assured him of his undying loyalty to the Queen, reminded him of the notorious villainies of the late Shane O'Neil, and gave it as his honest opinion that the sons were worse than the father. In support of this latter opinion he cited a case which had recently occurred in his own country where Con McShane had raided him and indiscriminately killed men, women and children.

Fitzwilliam lent a sympathetic ear, agreed that Shane's sons were untrustworthy villains, and finally dismissed the injured Earl with conciliatory pats on the back, and admonitions to studiously tread the narrow path of loyalty and virtue.

Captain Merriman, who was one of the bravest and most honest men in Ireland, was much more impressed by Hugh McShane's story than was the Deputy; in fact, when he heard that the latter had made light of it, he even felt called upon to write to Walsingham informing him of the favourable impression that Hugh had made upon him, and adding his opinion that, "if O'Neil were gone, Tyrone would prove as bad a member as ever came of his name."† Such a warning coming from such a humble source would have had little weight had it not been startlingly endorsed by the events which immediately followed.

Hugh McShane, after his interview with Fitzwilliam, made his way back as quickly as might be—though by a circuitous road, in order to avoid Tyrone's country—towards Strabane, breaking his journey at various convenient points. One of these

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 144-38.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 148-9.

was at Belleek in Fermanagh, where he sought the hospitality of Shane Maguire, who had been a friend of his in days gone by. Maguire, however, was now less friendly, and, discerning an opportunity for profit in the situation, he sent to Tyrone asking what he would offer for his guest. Tyrone replied that he would give twenty horses, which Maguire considered satisfactory, and the bargain was closed.* In some accounts of the affair it is suggested that Tyrone sent across a party who apprehended Hugh, but this is unlikely, in view of the extreme rapidity with which the whole transaction had to be carried through. The more correct version is undoubtedly that given in the "*Annals of Lough Cé*," which is as follows: "Hugh was taken by Shane Maguire in treachery in the house of a horseman of Maguire's people, for which the Earl gave him twenty horses."

Tyrone now had two of Shane's sons (Brian being already his prisoner), and he wrote to Tirlough Luineach suggesting that one of the three brothers, Hugh, Brian, or Con (who, for reasons which are not known, had been released by Tyrone a couple of months before and was now once more with Tirlough Luineach),† should always remain at Dungannon as a pledge for the good conduct of the other two. On these terms he said he was prepared to liberate either Hugh or Brian. Hugh, as may be supposed, was quite ready to fall in with the arrangement, but Con—who was the only one of the three concerned at large—took a very different view. He made a journey to Dungannon to discuss the proposition with Tyrone (and presumably with his two brothers), and was then given a fortnight in which to talk the matter over with Tirlough Luineach and come to some decision. What Tirlough Luineach's view of the matter may have been is not on record, but it is quite certain that Con was not converted to the idea of sacrificing his own liberty in order to release his brother, for the fourteen days were allowed to lapse, and on the fourteenth day Hugh was hanged on a convenient thorn tree.

Tyrone was accused in many quarters of having done the hanging with his own hands, but this he stoutly denied, and probably with truth.‡ That he was hard put to it to find a hangman is beyond doubt, for the Donnelly sept, who had been Shane's foster-brothers, did their best to make the execution an im-

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 150-71.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 141-22.

‡ Cal. State Papers, Vol. 151-20.

possibility by forbidding any man to have a hand in the hanging of the late O'Neil's son. In the end, however, Tyrone found two Meath men, named Naughten and Cormac McMurphy, who acted as manual assistants to his brother Cormac, who was the chief executioner.* Tyrone himself looked on. As a result of this act, the Donnelly sept seceded in a body from the Earl, and thenceforward their far from contemptible influence was on the side of Tirlough Luineach.

A high-handed proceeding such as the hanging of a man who had just laid important information before the Government, could hardly be overlooked even by such an opportunist as Fitzwilliam, and the Earl was summoned before the Privy Council to give an explanation of his action. His defence was curiously crude for a man of his imaginative powers. Hugh, he said, was a traitor and the son of a traitor; he had frequently raided his country, and had been guilty of many notable murders. "Many women and infants," he declared, "had by him been murdered, besides many that with great wounds had escaped his fury."† All this may have been true, but most probably was not, for Hugh had been for several years in Scotland, debarred by a stretch of sea from making raids on central Ulster, even if he had wished to. The fact was, of course, that Hugh's personal character, good, bad or indifferent, had nothing whatever to do with his untimely end. The man was a standing menace to Tyrone, both on account of the special knowledge he possessed of the Earl's political designs, and also because—of all Shane's sons—he was the most likely to successfully compete with Tyrone for the succession.

Tyrone was mildly censured by the Privy Council; he was bound in his own recognisances to reappear when called upon, and so sent home. It is probable that the incident would have been definitely closed then and there but for the persistence of Tirlough Luineach. The old O'Neil was greatly outraged by the whole proceeding, and he had no idea of accepting as final the exculpation of the time-serving Privy Council. Con McShane was sent off, in the capacity of a special envoy, to lay the whole chain of events before Burleigh, with a view to having Tyrone arraigned before a properly constituted Court. Fitzwilliam, however, was duly warned of this intended move—probably by Tyrone—and he managed to waylay and capture

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 151-20.

† *Ibid.*

Con as he was making his way through Dublin. The moment Con was in his power, Fitzwilliam removed any doubts that might previously have existed as to his leanings in the matter, by handing his prisoner over to the man who had just hanged his brother. Tyrone did not hang Con, though he had certainly more justification for doing so than had been apparent in the case of Hugh, for Con had been guilty of many cruelties to the Earl's people. Moreover, the moment Hugh was dead, Tirlough Luineach had made Con his tanist, at the same time formally discarding and disinheriting his own illegitimate son Art, with whom he had never been on the best of terms.* It can only be supposed that Tyrone feared the uproar that would most certainly have arisen had he hanged Con after the solemn jobation to which he had been treated by the Privy Council, for he contented himself with putting him in prison alongside of his brother Brian. A year later he was destined to add Henry to the collection of brothers, after which his prisoners were separated, Brian being kept at Dungannon, while Henry and Con were confined in separate islands in Leinster.

Elated by the so-far favourable course of events, Tyrone now determined to read the O'Neil a lesson for his audacity in asking for the payment of arrears of rent, and, in so doing, he established a Hibernian precedent which has successfully survived the centuries. The Earl had now enjoyed the best half of O'Neil's lands for six years without paying one penny of the absurdly inadequate rent which he had agreed to under Perrot's scheme.† The lands out of which Tyrone had tricked his late father-in-law, and in respect of which he had steadily refused to pay the agreed rent, had for him something more than an agricultural value. It is true that he was able to squeeze enormous rents out of the serfs that the arrangement placed at his mercy,‡ but, in addition to money, the lands conferred upon their overlord the terrorizing power which in Ireland always exacts reverence. He had absolute rule of life and limb, torture and mutilation, over the men, women, and children of the lands he rented. Such powers were looked upon as the

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 143-7.

† Tirlough Luineach to Queen, March 31st, 1590.

‡ Mountjoy estimated that Tyrone's income, when O'Neil, amounted to over £80,000 a year.

hall-marks of royalty, and, in the popular estimation, installed any such as exercised them in the outer ranks of the gods. Except for the acquisition of these lands, and for the territorial despotism which their possession conferred, Tyrone—on the death of Tirlough Luineach—would have entered the list of candidates for the succession on equal terms with Tirlough Luineach's sons, Shane's sons, and Tirlough Braselagh's sons. As it was, however, his election was a foregone conclusion, for he started as the acknowledged lord of half the lands associated with the title of O'Neil. Considering, then, the immense advantage, both moral and material, that he derived from the friendly arrangement entered into with Tirlough Luineach, his repudiation of the small rent agreed upon argues in the Earl a singularly mean and niggardly mind.

Apart from the question of rent, there may have been some reasonable justification according to the standard of the day for Tyrone's attack on Tirlough Luineach. The Earl was constantly accusing Shane's sons—acting for Tirlough Luineach—of raiding his country and massacring his people, and for these accusations there were probably some grounds. Tirlough Luineach had been defrauded of his rent, and, according to the custom of the country, his indignation would find its natural expression in bloody raids upon Tyrone's people. There is no evidence of Tyrone having so far retaliated. Now, however, he determined that it was time to act. He started his campaign with a surprise attack on Dunalong Castle, which he had the satisfaction of burning, Tirlough Luineach being away in his Lifford house at the time. Having given this preliminary indication of his mood, Tyrone then returned to Dungannon, and there made preparations for an excursion on a far more important scale against Lifford and Strabane. By the middle of April, 1589, his preparations were complete. He had mustered 1,000 armed men, at the head of which he set out from Dungannon and marched west, devastating the country as he went, the moment he had crossed his own boundary line. He crossed the Mourne below Omagh and followed the left bank of the river down to Newtown. Here Hugh Gallagher, who was in command of Tirlough Luineach's forces, had taken up a defensive position of considerable strength, but, on learning of Tyrone's numbers, he prudently withdrew towards Lifford. Tyrone followed till he had wedged Gallagher in between the

Mourne and Finn, and then he too became the victim of over-prudence. He had arranged with O'Donnell that his eldest son Donnell should arrive at Lifford simultancously with himself, and that the two forces should then unite and overwhelm Tirlough Luineach's small defensive army. Donnell had not yet arrived, and, although Tyrone's forces greatly outnumbered Gallagher's, he determined that it would be safer to await the arrival of the Donegal reinforcements before attacking. Accordingly on the night of April 30th he encamped on Carricklea Hill facing Lifford, keeping a sharp look-out to the west for the approach of his dilatory ally.

Now it so fell out that, by a piece of strangely happy fortune for Tirlough Luineach, there were at the moment at Lifford two companies of English soldiers commanded by Captain Mostyn,* who had lately been appointed Sheriff of Donegal in place of Captain Merriman, but who had been turned out by O'Donnell, and had taken temporary refuge with Tirlough Luineach. Mostyn pointed out to Gallagher how suicidal it would be for the weaker side numerically to wait till O'Donnell's force came up, and urged an immediate attack on the hill. Gallagher, however, had no liking for the scheme, and declared with considerable emphasis that nothing would induce him to attack at night,† but he agreed that an attack might reasonably be attempted in the morning. He, not unwillingly, resigned the leadership to Mostyn, who had the whole-hearted co-operation of Tirlough Luineach. The old chief had not taken the field for some years, but, though now nearly sixty years of age, he gallantly arrayed himself in mail shirt, with Perrot's steel skull upon his head, and placed himself alongside of Mostyn.

At the first streak of dawn the English captain and the Irish chief, supported by Hugh Gallagher, Tirlough Luineach's son Art, and Con McCalvagh's son Neil Garv, led the assault. The attacking party only numbered 400, of whom nearly half were English, while Tyrone had 1,000 men very strongly posted, but none the less the issue was never for a moment in doubt. Before Mostyn and the old O'Neil had come within striking distance, Tyrone's men broke and fled in all directions, headed by the Earl himself, who "made away and rested not till he came to Dungannon." Great numbers were slain in the

* "Hibernia Anglicana."

† Four Masters.

pursuit which followed, Tirlough Luineach's son Art—according to local panegyrists—himself killing 300 of the fugitives.* In the scrimmage old Tirlough Luineach received a bullet-wound in the shoulder and a lance-wound in the small of the back, and much commiseration from the Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam, who sent him up a surgeon and “much dressing for his wounds.”†

This was Hugh Gallagher's last appearance in public, for three months later Ineenduv—always thirsting to be revenged on him for the kidnapping of her beloved Hugh Roe, and the slaughter of her cousin Alexander— inveigled him under false pretences to her house at Mongavlin, where he was waylaid and murdered.

* Four Masters.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 158 47

CHAPTER XIV

The revolt of Cavan, Monaghan and Fermanagh—Its causes real and alleged—Tyrone's part in the affair—Monaghan and the McMahons—Sir Ross's complaints in the matter of a sheriff—Death of Sir Ross—Dispute over the succession—Hugh Roe McMahon—He is supported by Fitzwilliam—He abuses the power given him—Arrest of Hugh Roe McMahon—His trial and execution—Tyrone takes political advantage of the occurrence—His representation of the matter—He alarms the northern chiefs—Fitzwilliam's greed—New divisions of Monaghan—Severe English criticism of Fitzwilliam's action—He denies the charges made against him—Ever McCooley's evidence.

FOR fifty years Cavan, Monaghan and Fermanagh had been the model districts of Ulster, a fact due partly to self-interest, and partly to their proximity to the Pale. But, by a strange decree of fate, it was now ordained that these three counties were to be the prime movers in a rebellion which was to last ten years, and which was to exercise the most momentous and far-reaching effects upon the destinies of Ulster. The circumstances which turned these three good counties into bad counties occasioned at the time a very memorable stir.

A certain amount of obscurity must always surround the actual part which Tyrone played in the earlier stages of the rebellion known as Maguire's. According to the information laid by Hugh McShane, Tyrone had for some time past been planning a rebellion on a comprehensive scale, which was to take the form of a religious movement, and which was to have the active co-operation of Spain and the Vatican. On the other hand there are certain specific occurrences connected with Fitzwilliam's administration which all the Ulster chiefs subsequently pointed to as the first causes of the rebellion. The point in obscurity is as to whether these occurrences would, under normal conditions, have been in themselves a sufficient cause for rebellion, or whether they were merely seized upon by Tyrone as the public justification for a course which he had long been planning in secret. The latter theory is more

in line with the known facts. It must also be remembered that the traditional loyalty of Monaghan and Fermanagh, the first two counties to rebel, had been severely shaken by Perrot's sacrifice of their independence to Tyrone's growing ambition. All the blame for this, as may be supposed, was thrown by the chiefs and the people of Monaghan and Fermanagh on Perrot and his Government, and none on Tyrone,* who was the chief gainer thereby and the instigator of the act. With the two counties in this discontented mood, came the execution of Hugh Roe McMahon, and Tyrone's intriguing mind instantly recognized in the opportune event the required spur with which to goad McMahon and Maguire into line with his long-cherished schemes.

This much is quite clear, but it is by no means equally clear that Hugh Roe's execution would have aroused more than a very passing interest except for the untiring energy of Tyrone's secret agents.

The bald facts of the case are as follows: Sir Ross McMahon had for some time past been one of the pattern chiefs of Ulster, and—as an example to all others—he surrendered his lands to the Queen, and received them again from her, with direct succession to his heirs male, or—failing these—to his brother Hugh Roe. This was all in strict conformity with the English law of primogeniture. It was an invariable part of any such arrangement that a sheriff should be appointed to represent the dignity of the Government in the county. McMahon, however, bribed Fitzwilliam in a considerable sum not to burden him with this undesirable appendage. Fitzwilliam took the bribe, but nevertheless put the sheriff upon him.† This breach of faith so exasperated Sir Ross that he made an attack upon the sheriff (Captain Willis), killed several of his men, and would have killed Willis himself but for the intervention of the Earl of Tyrone. Sir Ross followed up the above armed protest by issuing a proclamation to the effect that there was to be no tillage in his country for the next three years, and—having in this way defied his late friend the Government—died decently in his bed in June, 1589.‡ Hugh Roe at once put in his claim to be appointed his successor, and, in furtherance of

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 132-48.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 207, Part VI.-126.

‡ Fitzwilliam to Burleigh, March 31st, 1589.

his claim, went up personally to Dublin, three^{very} weeks after his brother's death, to give any such undertakings and guarantees as the Government might require from him in return for their support. Prompt action was indeed rendered necessary by the irregular conduct of one Brian McHugh Oge,* who, with a backing of 600 hired Scots, defied Elizabeth and all her edicts, and forcibly seized upon the county. In this emergency it was very clearly the duty of the Deputy to give Hugh Roe his undivided support. The senior surviving brother of the late McMahon† was obviously the legitimate heir according to the English custom of primogeniture, which it was Elizabeth's aim to establish in Ireland. He had also been specifically named by Elizabeth during his brother's lifetime as the heir, in the event of Sir Ross dying childless. Fitzwilliam's habitual cupidity, however, so overcame his sense of right that he declined to give Hugh Roe the Government support till he had undertaken to pay him 600 beeves. As soon as that arrangement was agreed to, Fitzwilliam gave him 400 foot and 40 horse with which to turn out the usurper.‡

After being placed in command of his little army, Hugh Roe's conduct—it must be confessed—did not come up to expectations. He had a private grievance against Ever McCooley of Farney on account of some matter of rent supposed to be due, and, as Ever had no armed following and Brian McHugh had 600 Scots, an expedition against the former seemed to have attractions which the other alternative lacked. He accordingly invaded Farney with his 440 soldiers, killed two of Ever McCooley's brothers and a number of women and children, and, after capturing Ever in his house at Lisanisk, kept him a prisoner till he had paid the rent demanded.§ In the meanwhile, Brian McHugh Oge, being unopposed by any organized armed force, continued his triumphant career of devastation by capturing Clones and burning the Abbey.

Fitzwilliam—who saw in this chain of events no promise of his 600 beeves—pretended great indignation at the misuse of the Government troops which he had supplied, and he sent the story of Hugh Roe's sins to the Privy Council in England.

* All the principal Irish in the Monaghan dispute were McMahons, but for the sake of brevity the final name is left out.

† The younger brother Brian was in Dublin Castle.

‡ Fynes Moryson Itinerary.

§ Shirley's "History of Farney."

Burleigh recognized the magnitude of the offence, but he wrote back in November, 1589, instructing the Lord Deputy to take no violent measures against Hugh Roe for the time being. This was quite in line with Fitzwilliam's own interests, for he was always living in hopes of getting his cattle; but when, at the end of nearly two years, he was still without the beasts that he had bargained for, he lost patience, made a special journey up to Monaghan, arrested Hugh Roe, tried him by summary court-martial on a charge of murder and arson, and hanged him in front of his own house door.

This arbitrary act provided the alleged pretext for the rebellion of the northern chiefs. On the face of it, the cause appears out of all proportion to the effect in a country where high-handed executions were of painfully common occurrence. Hugh Roe had himself killed two of Ever McCooley's brothers, and quite a number of his people, because Ever McCooley owed him rent. Tyrone had very recently hanged his own cousin Hugh O'Neil on general grounds rather than for any specific offence. By comparison, Fitzwilliam's hanging of Hugh Roe on charges of murder and arson, which were not denied, appeared a defensible act; and there can be little doubt that it would have attracted no special attention, but for the interference of Tyrone. This crafty chief, however, was, as we are told by Fynes Moryson, "of a profound subtlety," and he cleverly used the incident to the best advantage as a lever with which to work on the personal fears of the Ulster chiefs and sub-chiefs. If he had simply held up the incident as an act of injustice actuated by sordid motives, the chances are that he would have made no impression. Those whom he addressed would have seen nothing wicked or unnatural in an act so inspired. His methods were surer and far more subtle, and were assisted to a considerable extent by the form which Fitzwilliam's own explanation took. It was clearly impossible for the Queen's Deputy to say that he had hanged a man because he had failed to pay him the 600 beeves with which he had bought his support. Such a defence might have excited little criticism in Ireland, but it would have excited very severe criticism from Queen Elizabeth in England.* Perrot was in the Tower on lesser charges than these. So Fitzwilliam

* The true facts of the case did ultimately come out, and were the occasion of Fitzwilliam being brought to trial in England.

gave forth that Hugh Roe McMahon was hanged for murder and arson. On this justification Tyrone pounced like a cat. What security of life, he argued, could any chieftain boast if he was liable to be hanged by the Government because his followers had chanced to kill a few women and children and to burn a few houses? That this was his line of argument is made perfectly clear by his own plea of justification put in after he had himself definitely joined the rebellion. In this plea he admitted his inability to control or restrain his own men, and argued from this that he himself might at any time be executed for outrages committed by his followers, which he was powerless to prevent. This cunningly-framed argument at once took hold of the popular imagination. "Hugh Roe McMahon," Tyrone pointed out to the chiefs, "was executed for distraining of his rights according to custom."* It was felt by his uneasy audience that, if this was to form a precedent, every chief in Ulster would henceforward go about with a halter round his neck; for what Hugh Roe McMahon had done—and been hanged for doing—they all did. As Fynes Moryson puts it, the capital charge levelled against Hugh Roe "was thought no rare thing nor great offence." The chiefs grew nervous and uneasy. A report was freely circulated that Fitzwilliam's design was to hang the chiefs in detail on some flimsy pretext, as in the case of Hugh Roe, and then to dispose of their lands to his own advantage.

Unfortunately, a decided tinge of probability was imparted to these gloomy forecasts by Fitzwilliam's own very questionable conduct after the execution in discussion. All sorts of exaggerated reports were afloat as to the actual financial benefits that accrued to the Deputy over the transaction. These reports had a foundation in fact, but no more. What actually happened was that Fitzwilliam gave out that, as Hugh Roe had been executed for murder, and as Brian McHugh Oge was a proclaimed rebel, no McMahon in chief would be appointed, but the five baronies of Monaghan would be apportioned as follows: Ever McCooley was to hold Farney under the Earl of Essex (to whose father it had been granted in 1575). Brian McHugh Oge (not to be confounded with the rebel of the same name) was to have Dartrey. Patrick McKenna retained the Trough, Monaghan went to Ross Bane and Cremourne to

* Carew MSS., 1594-137

Patrick McArt Moyle.* From each of these baronies, however (with the exception of Farney, which he could not touch), Fitzwilliam cut off a handsome slice for himself, which he at once put upon the market and sold, the principal buyers being Sir Henry Bagenal, Captain Henshaw, Baron Elliott, Mr. Solicitor Wilbraham, Parson O'Connell, Hugh Strowbridge, Thomas Asshe, Christopher Fleming and Captain Willis. The actual sum total that went into the Deputy's pocket over the transaction is not on record, the only known figure being £400 which Captain Henshaw paid for his share,† but the total sum must have been considerable.

Fitzwilliam's action in the matter of Hugh Roe McMahon aroused much unfavourable comment in England, and even in Irish official circles. Russell, who succeeded Fitzwilliam, pronounced the execution of Hugh Roe to have been "against conscience and justice." So deep a stir did the affair make that, within a year of the occurrence, the English Council had abolished all summary Court-Martials in Ireland, and had substituted in their place a system of periodical Assize Courts. No action was taken against Fitzwilliam himself till his return to England, but he was then formally arraigned on the following charges: "That he caused McMahon to be indicted at a special session, whither he himself rode, and he there caused the man to be hanged because he could not pay him a fee of 800 [*sic*] beeves. He also appointed a private session where Michael Fitzsimmons was in one day indicted, condemned and judged, and the next day executed, that his farm might be bestowed on the Bishop of Meath."‡

Fitzwilliam was ill at his house at the time the charges were made against him, and he replied in writing. He denied in the first case that the country—as alleged—had been divided up between himself, Bagenal and Henshaw. The McMahons, he said, had by far the greater part of it. He further claimed to have created 300 new freeholders, whose rents in the aggregate should have brought in £800 a year to Her Majesty. As to his alleged covetousness, he told the Council that Ever McCooley had offered him 7,000 cows to be made McMahon, but he virtuously turned aside from the offer, as he preferred the Queen's

* Shirley's "History of Farney."

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 207, Part VI.—126.

‡ Cal. State Papers, Vol. 176—19.

interest to cows. He concluded by the statement that all the country rejoiced at Hugh Roe's death. This last was probably true. It was certainly corroborated by the evidence of Ever McCooley McMahon, whom business of his own, in connection with Farney, took across to England at the time of Fitzwilliam's indictment. Ever's opinion was that Fitzwilliam was fully justified in executing Hugh Roe McMahon, not only on account of his invasion of Farney, "but for other just causes."* McCooley was, of course, an obviously biased witness, but his evidence seems to have had some weight with the Council in England, and in the end to have been a contributing factor to Fitzwilliam's acquittal. For acquitted he was. The evidence bearing on the matter was difficult to arrive at in England, and, when obtained, was hopelessly conflicting. It was also greatly in Fitzwilliam's favour that none of the acts with which he was charged were acts which adversely affected the Queen's pocket or fame. All other offences ranked low by the side of any act or word which disparaged the sacred person of Elizabeth, as poor Perrot had found out to his cost.

* Shirley's "History of Farney."

CHAPTER XV

Death of Sir Cuconnaught Maguire—Connor Roe and Hugh Maguire dispute for the succession—Hugh defies the Government—His explanations—The abuses of the sheriffs—General state of corruption in Elizabethan Ireland—Causes of the same—Tyrone's marriage to Mabel Bagenal—His eagerness for her dowry—His ill-treatment of her—Her return to Newry and death—Hugh Roe O'Donnell's first escape from Dublin Castle—His betrayal by Phelim O'Toole—His recapture and second escape in 1591—Suspected connivance of Fitzwilliam—Garrett Moore's part—Death of Maplesden the Governor—Russell's suspicions—The Queen's suspicions—Henry and Art McShane escape with Hugh Roe—Death of Art McShane—Hugh Roe and Henry McShane reach Dungannon—Henry imprisoned by Tyrone—Hugh McManus abdicates in favour of Hugh Roe—Battle of Glencolumbkille—Death of Donnell O'Donnell—Con McGalvagh's nine sons—Hugh Roe burns Strabane and raids O'Cahan—Tirlough Luineach's helplessness.

IN the meanwhile, in the neighbouring county of Fermanagh—as ill-fortune would have it—the chieftry became vacant very nearly at the same moment as that of Monaghan. Sir Ross McMahan and Sir Cuconnaught Maguire both died in the same year. The rival candidates in Fermanagh were Sir Cuconnaught's two sons, Connor Roe and Hugh. Connor Roe was reputed to be legitimate, but Hugh, who was many years his junior—in fact young enough to be his son—most certainly was not, being the son of Nuala O'Donnell, now the wife of Neil Garv. Fitzwilliam supported Connor Roe, who was the proper heir according to the law of primogeniture, but Hugh, who was a young man of high spirit and of wide ambitions, cared nothing for the law of primogeniture, and called in the help of his kinsman Donnell O'Donnell to support his claim. Donnell responded with commendable promptitude, and crossed the border with a force which completely overshadowed anything that Connor Roe could put into the field. In the days when might was right there was no appeal against such an argument, and, at Lisnaskea, Hugh was duly elected the ruling lord of Fermanagh.

A defiance of the Government authorities such as this was tantamount to an open declaration of rebellion, and Hugh

Maguire was duly proclaimed a traitor. He had but a very small armed following of his own, and, when the Donegal men had returned to their own country, and the forces of the Queen were on his trail, he became a hunted fugitive, evading capture in the recesses of O'Rourke's (Leitrim) or O'Donnell's country rather than in his own.

It is not at first apparent why a man who could no doubt have made a satisfactory composition of some sort with Fitzwilliam and Connor Roe, should have jeopardized all by an act which brought him neither riches nor power, and which turned him into a hunted outlaw. His own explanation, given seven years later when all the rebel chiefs put down their grievances on paper, was that he had paid Fitzwilliam 300 beeves, and Bagenal 150 beeves, to be absolved for one year from the incubus of a sheriff; and that, "notwithstanding that the Deputy took the bribe, he nevertheless sent Captain Willis in as sheriff with 100 men." This story was probably true, for it is quite in keeping with what we know of Fitzwilliam; but, even if we accept it in its entirety, the effect at first sight seems altogether out of proportion to the cause. Why rebel, it may be asked, because of the mere imposition of so respectable and orderly an officer as a sheriff? The answer is that the sheriffs were, alas, for the most part neither respectable nor orderly. They were really supplementary county chiefs who bought from the Government the right to bully, punish, kill and extort in exactly the same way that the native chiefs themselves bullied, punished, killed and extorted. As the appointment of a sheriff meant not only divided authority but divided spoils as well, it is not surprising that there was no form of Government interference which the chiefs viewed with such disfavour. The post was practically put up to auction by the Deputy, and the highest bidder then laid himself out to get back his capital outlay by the shortest cut possible. Hence abuses of all kinds. Elizabeth was fully aware of these abuses, and it is only fair to her memory to say that she did her utmost to put a stop to them, but the combination against her was too strong. When at last she found an honest Deputy in Lord Burgh, she put the matter plainly to him. "I am informed," she wrote, "that there have been many foul abuses by the selling of offices and by making of sheriffs in perpetuity, whose lewdness has been the cause of many revolts in regard to their

oppressions." The sheriff question formed a prominent feature in the peace negotiations which took place in 1595, and it was one of the concessions made by Tyrone on that occasion that sheriffs should be accepted in the Ulster counties, always provided that they were honest men, "lest," he added in the beautiful language which invariably characterized all his declarations written or spoken, "by their evil dealings we be driven to forget our loyalty in seeking the safety of our lives and goods, as heretofore we have been abused by the over-greedy desire of lucre and ill-dealing of such as have borne office in Ulster."

It must be remembered in reflecting upon the appalling corruption and rapacity which characterized Elizabethan administration in Ireland, and which reached its climax under Fitzwilliam, that the better class of English did not find their way to Ireland. Those who did come voluntarily were by no means the pick of the population. "The reason why both the Council, Clergy and English inhabitants in this kingdom have been noted of so corrupt a disposition," Mountjoy wrote, in his discourse on Irish affairs in 1600, "is because for the most part they are, in all three kinds, such as England rather refuseth." Bankrupts, failures in other walks of life, refugees from justice or from their importunate creditors, needy adventurers, shady characters of all descriptions for whom England was getting too hot, these gravitated naturally to the sister isle, where report had it that fortunes were to be easily and quickly amassed by such as were not too scrupulous as to the methods to be employed. Those of the better class who found themselves compelled to cross the Channel, either by force of circumstances or in obedience to the Queen's orders, were not long in getting infected with the general contagion. From the first moment of their landing in Ireland they found themselves in an atmosphere which literally reeked of corruption, and unless their characters were of cast-iron they speedily learnt to do in Ireland as others did. The sheriffs, for the most part, were mere soldiers of fortune. They had no aim in their vocation except personal gain, and the powers that their official position gave them were chiefly used to this end. As to the sheriffs referred to by Elizabeth who were appointed "in perpetuity," these simply paid an annual head-rent to the Deputy, and then farmed the county to their own advantage. The chiefs, it is

true, did exactly the same, with this one very marked difference, that their head-rents were constitutional, and were paid to the Queen, whereas the sheriffs' were illicit, and were paid in secret to the Deputy. The net result was that each county had to sustain the drain of what would now be called "landlord's exactions" in duplicate, the chief sucking it dry from one quarter and the sheriff from another.

While the general unrest in southern Ulster was gradually crystallizing into definite rebellion, two contemporaneous events may be considered, each of which, in its turn, had a marked effect upon the political outlook in the north.

Tyrone had already married three wives, one of whom was divorced and the other two dead, and in 1591 he aspired to fill up the periodical vacancy with Mabel Bagenal, the youngest sister of the Marshal. It will be remembered that Tirlough Luineach had made a somewhat similar proposition with regard to the old Marshal's sister-in-law, in respect of which he had been very rudely rebuffed. The younger O'Neil received no better encouragement in the matter of Mabel, but Tyrone was a very different person from old Tirlough Luineach, and he was not in the least disposed to take "No" for a final answer. So importunate did he in the end become, that in August, 1591, Bagenal thought it advisable to send his sister off to stay with Sir Patrick Barnewall at Turvey. As to what subsequently happened we have only Tyrone's own account, which is as follows: Having learnt of the place in which his lady was concealed, Tyrone arrived there one night with a select band of followers and entered Sir Patrick's house, where the whole party was pleasantly entertained, and where much wine flowed. After dinner Mabel went off quite willingly, riding pillion behind Captain William Warren, to whose house at Drumeconragh the whole party then rode. There the marriage was duly solemnized by no less a person than the Bishop of Meath,* who afterwards deposed that the lady had gone through the ceremony willingly enough.† If so, it must have been the wealth and position of the bridegroom which attracted, for Tyrone was well on the way to fifty, and Mabel was twenty, and number four! ‡

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 149-39, and Vol. 160-58.

† Meehan's "Lives of the Earls."

‡ Cal. State Papers, Vol. 149-58.

In this affair—romantic or otherwise—Tyrone was not quite the lovesick swain that might be imagined. There was a prosaically sordid background to his apparent infatuation, for Mabel had a marriage portion of one thousand pounds which had been left her by old Sir Nicholas, and which her brother not unnaturally refused to hand over. Even two years after the marriage, the Earl was still making pitious representations to the Privy Council on the subject.*

Although the Bagenal-Tyrone alliance can scarcely be described as a love match, the Earl seems to have made certain efforts at the start to please his new bride. He gave her a Welsh woman as a tiring-maid, and spent quite a considerable sum of money on modernizing Dungannon Castle, which he fitted up with expensive furniture got over expressly from London.† These new toys may have pleased the Countess at the beginning, but Tyrone's conduct in other directions did not at all please her. His constancy, unfortunately, left much to be desired, with the result that domestic harmony at Dungannon Castle was very short-lived indeed. Tyrone was much puzzled by his wife's narrow views. In apparently genuine surprise he complained to the Privy Council that "because I do affect two other gentlewomen, she has me in mislike."‡ In the end Tyrone's patriarchal relations with the "other two gentlewomen" (Magennis's daughter and Angus McDonnell's daughter) proved too much for poor Mabel, and within a very short time of her marriage she left her lord and went back to live with her brother Henry in Newry. She died in 1596. Tyrone's abduction and subsequent ill-usage of his sister did much to increase the hatred which already existed between Bagenal and Tyrone, and the mutual enmity thus bred and nourished was not without its effect upon the subsequent trend of events in Ulster.

An event of far greater political importance was the escape of Hugh Roe O'Donnell from Dublin Castle. Perrot had been approached by Inceenduv, soon after Hugh Roe's capture, with an offer of two thousand pounds if he would arrange his release or escape;§ but Perrot failed to accomplish the first,

* Carew MSS., 1594-137. Tyrone to Privy Council, Nov. 1593.

† Fitzwilliam to Burleigh, Dec. 1591.

‡ Trevelyan Papers.

§ Perrot to Walsingham, March 18th, 1588.

and, having so failed, was afraid to attempt the second. The offer was renewed to the more facile Fitzwilliam, who made strenuous efforts to get Burleigh to agree to Hugh Roe's release. He put forward many specious reasons why it was impolitic to keep the heir-presumptive to the Donegal chiefry any longer in confinement; adding ingenuously: "And upon my honour no reward maketh me write this much."* Burleigh, however, was obdurate on the subject, and Hugh Roe remained in Dublin Castle till 1590, when Fitzwilliam—who was both greedier and more venturesome than Perrot—determined to take the risk of manipulating the young O'Donnell's escape.

The whole affair, however, proved a lamentable fiasco. Hugh Roe got safely away as far as the house of a friend of his named Phelim O'Toole, but O'Toole gave information to Charles Segar, who was then Governor of the Castle, and the prisoner was recaptured, to the no little mortification no doubt of the Deputy, whose arrangement with Ineenduv was on the basis of payment by results.

A year later things were better managed. On this occasion Tyrone took charge of the arrangements. Richard Weston, his English Chancellor of the Exchequer, went to Dublin, taking with him one thousand pounds in gold and a quantity of sarsnet, which had been given him by Captain Garrett Moore.† The sarsnet was for the purpose of making a rope, and the cash was to be dispensed as occasion might demand. Since Hugh Roe's first attempted escape changes had taken place in Dublin Castle; these came about as follows: Segar, the Governor, had been offered large sums to effect the release of Phelim O'Reilly, and, being presumably an honest or a timid man, had made a clean breast of the whole affair to Fitzwilliam. His reward was to be removed from the government of the Castle, which was then bestowed on one John Maplesden.‡ To John Maplesden, then, went Weston with his one thousand pounds. What actually transpired between Weston, Fitzwilliam and Maplesden is not known, but subsequent events point suggestively to the conclusion that, whereas Maplesden got all the blame, Fitzwilliam got all the money. In any event, the money would have been of no use to Maplesden, for two days

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 148-24.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 207, Part IV.-21.

‡ Fynes Moryson Itinerary.

after Hugh Roe's escape he conveniently died.* The chain of circumstances is peculiar—so peculiar, in fact, that it is difficult to believe that Maplesden's sudden and very opportune death was entirely due to natural causes.

Fitzwilliam, of course, sheltered himself behind the dead Governor. He wrote to Burleigh reporting with virtuous pride that—not content with the Governor's death—he had posthumously removed him from his office, and, in addition, had caused the head jailer to be loaded with irons and cast into a dungeon. These marks of zeal were apparently accepted in high quarters as proof of Fitzwilliam's non-complicity, for, as far as we know, nothing more was heard of the matter at the time. Russell, however, who succeeded Fitzwilliam, would seem to have had his own views on the subject of Hugh Roe's escape and its causes, for we find him pointing out in a letter to Burleigh in 1595 that "Fitzwilliam discharged the former Constable of the Castle, and left his own man in his stead, which urgeth suspicion of great compositions in the matter."† Burleigh no doubt communicated this intelligence to the Queen, and so set her thinking, for two years later she informed Lord Burgh that "she had certain information that Hugh Roe had escaped by practice of money bestowed on somebody."‡

The escape itself was carried out in a thoroughly business-like manner. In the Castle, in addition to Hugh Roe O'Donnell, were Shane's two sons, Henry and Art. The sarsnet provided by Captain Garrett Moore proved quite adequate for the purpose for which it was intended. A rope was made by means of which the three let themselves down over the wall, forced the door on to the bridge across the moat with a convenient baulk of timber (no doubt placed there for the purpose), and so walked out. The sentry was absent. Now it is interesting to note that the £1,000 bribe, as well as the sarsnet and the pocket-money which accompanied it, had been ostensibly supplied for the benefit of Hugh Roe only, Shane's sons being the objects of Tyrone's very particular loathing. The fact of their being included in the escaping party is therefore rather remarkable, and furnishes strong presumptive evidence that, in the first place, Fitzwilliam was no party to the escape of

* Fitzwilliam to Burleigh, June 2nd, 1592.

† Russell to Burleigh, April, 1595.

‡ Carew MSS., 1597-269.

Shane's sons (for which he had not been paid), and, in the second place, that Tyrone was a party to it, and had planned it with a view to getting Henry and Art into his own hands. His immediate seizure of Henry on his arrival at Dungannon leaves little room for doubt on this point.

The three fugitives, having got clear of Dublin, made their way on foot as far as Ballynecor,* where they were able to buy a good horse, which helped them along on their way. On the day following another horse was bought from a man named Feagh McHugh, which gave Hugh Roe and Henry a horse apiece. Poor Art had no need of one, for he had grown very fat in prison, and the exposure and cold killed him on the second day. The two survivors now rode on to Mellifont Abbey in Louth, where Captain Garrett Moore gave them fresh horses in exchange for their worn-out ones,† By this means they were able to reach the house of Tirlough McHenry in the Fews. From there they went on to Armagh, and finally reached Dungannon safely, but in a state of extreme exhaustion and misery, for the weather had been intensely cold. Here Henry McShane was saved any further fatigue, for Tyrone at once clapped him into prison alongside of his brothers Con and Brian.

Hugh Roe, after a good rest and a long and secret political discussion with his father-in-law, went on to Maguire at Belleek, and finally reached Donegal; but he was very ill for a long while, and his two great toes had to be amputated as the result of frost-bite. The situation, however, was well worth the loss of two toes, for Hugh Roe was now not only the undisputed heir to the chieftry, but essential lord of Donegal as well, old Hugh McManus, his father, being quite past ruling. The same could certainly not be said of his mother. That remarkable woman was as active and ambitious as ever. Her military capacity was no less conspicuous than her political zeal. Between the dates of Hugh Roe's first and second escapes she swept away the last obstacle that stood in the way of her beloved son's succession, by completely crushing his half-brother in a battle at Glencolumbkille, in which Donnell himself and two hundred of his followers were killed.‡ This was but preliminary to the last step which was destined to set the

* Meehan says that they stayed a fortnight with O'Byrne in Glenmalur, but this is not probable.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 207, Part IV.-21.

‡ Four Masters.

crown on her long-cherished ambition. No sooner was Hugh Roe convalescent, than Incenduv persuaded her lord to abdicate in favour of his son, and in May, 1592, Hugh Roe was officially installed as the O'Donnell at Kilmacrennan.* The election, however, was by no means universally popular, on account of the candidate's half-Scotch origin, and many stayed away, including old Hugh McHugh Duv, the representative of the junior line, Sir John O'Dogherty, the O'Gallaghers, and, it need scarcely be added, all the sons of Con McCalvagh.†

Although Neil Garv was the only one of these nine brothers who achieved any historical prominence, the fate of the others is not without its bearing on the story of Ulster. Tirlough Luineach having—under persuasion by Perrot—got rid of his Scotch army, and being subsequently deserted by his English bands, found himself practically defenceless, a circumstance which Tyrone lost no time in attempting to turn to his own advantage. Mainly, however, owing to the chance presence at Strabane of Captain Mostyn and some English soldiers, Tyrone's first attempt miscarried, and he was badly defeated at Carricklea, as already described. This was on May 1st, 1589, nearly two years before Hugh Roe's escape. In spite of this extremely fortunate victory, Tirlough Luineach was wise enough to see that he must speedily be crushed unless his standing army could be replaced. He accordingly took immediate steps to get over some of the Scots that Hugh McShane had already contracted for in Cantyre, and, within three months of the battle of Carricklea, we find him with a certain number of these hardy warriors at his disposal. In the security ensured by their presence he rebuilt Strabane in 1591,‡ and handed back Lifford to the sons of Con McCalvagh. This act had the natural effect of reviving the eternal feud between the main line of the O'Donnells (at the time represented by Incenduv) and the descendants of Calvagh. Almost immediately after Con's sons had resumed occupation of their ancestral possessions, Calvagh, the eldest of the nine brothers, was ambushed and killed near the River Finn. A year later the same fate overtook the second brother Manus very near the same spot. This made the third murder that Incenduv had brought off within twelve months, for Hugh Gallagher's assassination was sand-

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 165-6-1.
al. State Papers, Vol. 164-36-1.

† Four Masters.

wiched in between that of the two brothers. Neil Garv was now the eldest survivor of the nine (his brother Nachten having been killed as early as 1582),* and in the autumn of 1589, almost immediately, in fact, after the arrival of Tirlough Luineach's Scots, he borrowed some companies of these warriors, and, to avenge the death of his brothers, made a raid on the O'Gallagher country in central Donegal. All these events took place while Hugh Roe was still a prisoner in Dublin Castle, and they are only of interest as explaining the first of that young man's acts on attaining convalescence. Incidentally, it may be noted that it is extremely doubtful whether the indolent and easy-going O'Neil would have ventured on so provocative a step as the reinstatement of Con's sons in the disputed territory of the Finn Valley, had he foreseen that Hugh Roe would so soon make his escape. The wind, however, had been sown, and the tempest had to be reaped. It was not long in coming. As soon as the young O'Donnell's toes were healed, he set out to avenge the various wrongs to his name and prestige. Making a sudden dash across the Mourne, he ravaged and burned all the Strabane district, at the same time putting to the sword every man found capable of bearing arms.† It was unfortunate for Tirlough Luineach, in this emergency, that almost all his Scots had by now crossed the river and taken service with the sons of Con, who were young and energetic, and whose enterprising spirit opened a wider field for the exercise of their calling than was to be found with the old O'Neil, who was by this time, according to Fitzwilliam, "quite past government, being overcome by the drink which he is daily in."‡ He was also without any efficient commander. His two sons Art and Cormac had long ago deserted him and ranged themselves on the side of Tyrone, and he was generally friendless and deserted. Lady Agnes, his wife, was still detained a prisoner in Scotland by her brother Angus. The old man was therefore practically alone in the world, and quite powerless to offer any opposition to Hugh Roe's devastations.

Encouraged by his initial success, Hugh Roe next swept down upon O'Cahan, who, as an urragh of Tirlough Luineach, offered a legitimate target for his spleen. O'Cahan, on this occasion, reckoned discretion to be the better part of valour,

* Four Masters. † Four Masters.

‡ Fitzwilliam to Burleigh, Dec. 30th, 1591.

and prudently shut himself up in his Castle of Limavady, while Hugh Roe ravaged the whole of his country unopposed, and returned in triumph and with much prey to Donegal.

Nothing succeeds like success, and O'Dogherty, fearing a similar visitation for Inishowen, hurriedly made his submission to the conquering O'Donnell, and was provisionally forgiven for his reprehensible absence from the inaugural ceremony at Kilmacrenan.

The whole chain of events is singularly instructive as an illustration of the curious Irish reading of the *lex talionis*. The *casus belli* in this instance had been the re-establishment of Con McCalvagh's sons in the Finn Valley. Tirlough Luineach was responsible for this, for only through his means could they get the Scotch fighting men whose backing alone made the project feasible. As a protest against the whole transaction, Tirlough Luineach was raided, and O'Cahan (who had nothing whatever to do with the matter, but who was a source of revenue to Tirlough Luineach) was also raided; but the sons of Con, whose annexation of lands was the actual cause of offence, were carefully given a wide berth, and left in undisturbed possession of the Finn Valley. This curious misdirection of revenge was no doubt prompted by the knowledge that Con's sons had a substantial fighting force at their back, while Tirlough Luineach and O'Cahan had not.

CHAPTER XVI

Institution of Assize Courts in Ulster—The great benefits conferred—The feudal system in Ireland—Efforts of the chiefs to retain it—Opinions of Wilbraham and Weston—Tyrone's religious attitude—The unimportance of Irish popular opinion—Causes of Tyrone's difficulties with the Scots—Insult to Angus McDonnell's daughter—Political reasons for Tyrone's preference for Magennis's daughter—Shane McBrian offers for Angus's daughter—Angus's fury against Tyrone—Tyrone is forced to organize an Irish Army—Absence of enthusiasm for his cause—Introduction of the religious question—Maganran is nominated Primate of all Ireland—His death.

THE execution of Hugh Roe McMahon had—among other things—sounded the knell of martial law in Ulster. The old system of summary jurisdiction was, by order of Elizabeth, superseded by periodical Assize Courts, where not only political offences of the first magnitude were disposed of, but where the grievances and disputes of the proletariat could be remedied or adjusted by duly qualified persons having no interest in the verdict. Curiously enough, the first experimental field of the new system was the county of Monaghan itself, where, according to reports of members of the Circuit, its advent was hailed with extravagant demonstrations of delight by the humbler sections of the population.* Such a statement coming from such a quarter would not have a high historical value were it not supported by the extreme probability of its truth. Where the lower orders are systematically trodden under heels of iron, any form of redress and any Court of appeal must necessarily be welcome. The condition of the lower orders in Monaghan at the time of the Circuit are set out, in harrowing detail, in long descriptive letters written shortly afterwards by Judge Weston and Mr. Solicitor Wilbraham. The conditions of society which these letters disclose are so bad that it is not difficult to believe that any form of justice, however crude, would come as a godsend to those who knew of no law but that of the stronger. Justice to the poor

* Mr. Solicitor Wilbraham to Burleigh, Sept. 1593.

in Ireland was outside the experience of any man. The feudal system, long since dead in England, was still in full vigour in the sister isle. The chiefs exercised absolute power of life and death, limb and property, over their thralls. They were untrammelled tyrants. The soil-tillers were assessed no higher than the beasts of the field. Their lives had no value. All that they produced was their lord's, and their only claim to be allowed to cumber the ground was so that they might satisfy his greed. The views of Neil Garv O'Donnell on this point* may be taken as representative of the views of all Irish chiefs of the day. That people, who were assessed no higher than the lower animals, should now have a judicial assembly to which they could appeal for redress against acts of tyranny, was to the chiefs an outrageous reversal of all that was traditional and proper. The end of such things, they argued, could only be the gradual paralysis of the chieftain's divine rights throughout Ulster, and the substitution of those detestable forms of arbitration which went by the name of Justice. They saw in front of them, in short, a revolutionary programme of an advanced type, and, following the example of all tyrants of all ages, they prepared to resist it by every reactionary engine within their reach.

And so it fell out that, in more ways than one, Hugh Roe McMahon's execution was responsible for the outbreak of the ten years' rebellion, for, cordially as the act itself was hated, and its recurrence feared by the chiefs, the reformation in the administration of justice, which it made necessary, was even more feared. No Russian Grand Duke ever dreaded the emancipation of the serfs more than the Ulster chiefs dreaded the elevation of the peasants to the status of human beings. Sir Geoffrey Fenton, who knew Ireland as well as most men, was convinced that Tyrone's real grievance was "the establishment of a settled Government in Monaghan and Fermanagh, which he and Hugh Roe feared would in time come their way."† Sir George Carew, another Anglo-Irishman of long and wide experience, held the same view. "The universal desire of the Ulster chiefs," he wrote to Burleigh, "is to keep justice out, so that they may tyrannize with absolute power, confiscating both goods and lives at pleasure."‡ Wilbraham, the Solicitor-

* See Ch. xxix.

† Fenton to Burleigh. Aug. 2nd, 1594.

‡ Carew MSS., 1594.

General, after the Circuit of Down, says much the same thing in rather different form: "Neil McBrian Feartagh and McCartan seek no letters patent so long as they may ravin at pleasure on their tenants, which are thrall'd in misery." The letters patent here referred to were those which conferred on the holder the benefit of a lease in perpetuity from the Crown.

Contemporaneous reflections such as these, in all their quaint crudity of language, often give a clearer view of the state of a dead-and-gone society than a more carefully-worded epitome of the same. The report of Sir William Weston, the judge, after the Down Circuit, is particularly illuminating both as to the unhappy condition of the country and the causes responsible for it. The two main causes pointed to are insecurity of tenure and the absence of any fixed rent, the custom being for the chiefs to take from their people anything and everything they wanted according to the caprice of the moment. Such relations can, in no circumstances, breed love between chief and thrall, nor is it conceivable that such existed in Ulster at the end of the sixteenth century. A certain superstitious glamour undoubtedly surrounded the person of the chief, but it was not born of love. Bingham, in writing to Burleigh, gave it as his opinion that both Hugh Roe O'Donnell's and Maguire's people would gladly cut their chiefs' throats if they could.* Bingham wrote this in August, 1593, and six months later—in allusion to Tyrone's share in the rising—Bagenal wrote that "Tyrone is threatening with fire and sword all who will not join him." The fact behind this communication is interesting, inasmuch as it completely negatives any idea of a popular and universal aim behind the earlier part of a rebellion which, for ten years, taxed all the resources of Elizabeth's Ministers; nor, indeed, was there any such aim, till the moment when Tyrone, recognizing that the clement of universality was essential to the continuance of the struggle, introduced the question of religion. At the outset, however, the rebellion was simply a revolt of the chiefs against innovations which threatened their personal interests, or—to put it in plainer language still—which threatened their untrammelled despotism over their serfs.

From such a situation the elements of successful rebellion would appear to be completely absent. Bagenal wrote to

* Bingham to Burleigh, Aug. 1593.

Burgh in 1592: "The people of Tyrone do earnestly desire to be delivered from the intolerable burden of the lawless charges which the Earl and Tirlough Luineach daily impose upon them." If this were so—and it is impossible to doubt the truth of this statement—the masses of the Irish people should by rights have been ranged on the side of the Government rather than of the rebel chiefs. It must be remembered, however, that in Ulster the situation was remarkable, and, in fact, unique to this extent, that the chiefs in rebellion were virtually independent of the goodwill or sympathy of their subjects. The tribal raiding forces, it is true, were home products, but except as raiders they had little military value. When any movement of unusual magnitude was on foot, the reliance of the chiefs was almost entirely on hired foreign troops specially brought over for the purpose, usually from Cantyre, Argyleshire, or the Western Isles. Such being the conditions, the goodwill or co-operation of the natives was non-essential. They were not even pawns in the game; they were rather the board on which all the combatants alike trampled. Unfortunately, however, for the development of Tyrone's scheme, he had, by his own act, when he hanged Hugh McShane, cut himself off from all hope of military aid in the future from either the Macleans or the Campbells. Hugh's mother, the Countess of Argyle, had been a Maclean by birth and a Campbell by marriage, and both these clans looked upon Hugh's execution as a personal affront offered to their blood, and from the year 1589 onwards refused Tyrone all support.* For the next six years he still had the McDonnells, on whom he could, and did, draw for troops, but in the end, by another short-sighted act, he succeeded in alienating the sympathies of that clan as effectually as those of the Macleans and Campbells.

Shortly after his marriage with Mabel Bagenal, Tyrone had—to the just indignation of that young lady—"affected two other gentlewomen," of whom one was the daughter of Angus McDonnell and the other the sister of Arthur Magennis. The patriarchal simplicity of this arrangement did not appeal to Mabel, and after two years of life at Dungannon she went back to her brother at Newry. Shortly afterwards Tyrone grew weary of Angus's daughter and sent her about her ways, and when Mabel Bagenal died, in 1595, he married Magennis's sister with

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 183-77-1. Carew MSS., 1596-261.

a considerable flourish of trumpets. The probability is that the alliance was purely political. In fact, we are told that, in the sixteenth century, neither the Irish chiefs nor those under them ever married except for the purpose of gaining some political or financial advantage. Love-affairs were never cemented by marriage,* because in such cases there was nothing tangible to be gained by the ceremony, and it therefore appeared unnecessary.

Angus was, at the date of Mabel Bagenal's death, a waning power in Ulster. His agent, McNess, could raise no more than sixty men in the Glynns, and was already beginning to be overshadowed and threatened with extinction by the growing power of the sons of Sorley Boy.

The Magennis alliance, on the other hand, offered far greater possibilities. Old Sir Hugh had always been a loyal subject, and was consequently cordially hated by Tyrone, who, in order to mark his displeasure, raided him in 1595 (after burning Bagenal's flour mills at Newry), and carried off fifteen hundred of his cattle. Old Sir Hugh did not long survive this attack, for he died on January 12th in the following year, 1596. Tyrone, however, was still very bitter against the family, and instead of approving the succession of Sir Hugh's eldest son Arthur, he nominated one Glasney McCawley (Magennis) as tanist of the country,† in spite of the fact that Arthur was his own son-in-law. This last step had the desired effect, as Tyrone well knew that it would. Arthur Magennis discarded the cause of Elizabeth, and made abject submission to the Earl, who, in return, married his son-in-law's sister, and conferred upon the brother of his new wife the lordship over the whole of Lecale, Kilwarlin and McCartan's country, in addition to that of his own lands of Iveagh. The situation was now satisfactorily smoothed out for all parties concerned, with the exception of Angus and his daughter. Shane McBrian, who was lord of North Clondeboye, and therefore a neighbour of Angus in the Glynns, came forward with a sporting offer to marry the cast-off lady,‡ seeing, no doubt, opportunities in the situation for consolidating his lands and those of the adjoining Glynns, but the offer was not favourably received.

* See Appendix A to Introduction Carew MSS., 1589-1600.

† Russell to Burleigh, Jan. 26th, 1595.

‡ Cal. State Papers, Vol. 188-9.

Angus's rage at the humiliation to his blood knew no bounds, and, from the day when Tyrone married Magennis's sister, he became his implacable foe.* While Tyrone was on his honeymoon at Castle Roe on the Bann, the old McDonnell wrote Russell a letter signed by both himself and his eldest son, Donald Gorm, offering the Queen the services of himself, his sons and the entire McDonnell clan against the perfidious Earl.

The practical outcome of the chain of events above described was that, by the end of 1596, Tyrone had succeeded in alienating the friendship of all the three Scotch clans chiefly identified with the interests of Ulster. An entirely new military situation was thus created, and it speedily became clear to Tyrone that, if he was going to rebel and fight the English Government, it would have to be with Irish soldiers. This meant hard work and new departures in various directions, but Tyrone was not the man to be daunted by the unaccustomed. Spanish drill-sergeants, specially sent over for the purpose, were set to work on the local raw material, and for several years, prior to the final collision at Kinsale (1601), the Irish kerne and gallowglasses, and the freshly-recruited peasantry were "infinitely belaboured with drill," to their extreme disgust. The net result, however, was, in the end, the formation of a native army independent of Scotland; and in Tyrone's Kinsale army, estimated at 6,500 men, the only foreign element was 120 Scots under Randall McSorley.†

It was with the idea of inspiring this new army with the necessary enthusiasm that the religious element was introduced. Tyrone was fully alive to the fact that the movement which he had in contemplation was no mere tribal raid, where the prospect of rapine and pillage would have been an all-sufficient incentive. He aimed at a general rising in which not only Ulster but the whole of Ireland should take part. For the success of an undertaking on such a scale, the sympathy, if not the enthusiastic support, of the entire population was all but essential. There was, the Earl recognized, one force and one force only strong enough to compel such sympathy, and that was religion. Religion, too, was obviously the only ground on which the material aid of Spain could be logically invoked. He accordingly assumed the pose of a

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 205-100.

† Chichester to Cecil, Nov. 22nd, 1601.

religious reformer struggling to free his country from the burden of heretical institutions. This attitude was all the more necessary in view of the fact that the real, but undiscovered, object for which the chiefs were fighting was beyond the understanding of the rank and file, and was indeed an object with which the rank and file—had they understood—would have been anything but sympathetic. Religion was therefore waved before their eyes. It was given out that the rebellion aimed at the extirpation of heresy and at the restoration to Ireland of her ancient pure religion.

The proclamation of a Holy War seldom fails of its object. It is the surest appeal to the murderous instincts of the uneducated yet discovered. In the case of the Ulster rebellion it was not slow in imparting to a rather obscure movement a definite aim which was within the intellectual grasp of all. The crusade against the introduction of English customs was interpreted by the priests as a crusade against heresy and the introduction of heretical innovations calculated to undermine the true faith. In the days of the Holy Inquisition, representations such as these rarely failed to achieve their aim. There was no need for them to be backed by any intricate points of doctrine. The religious mind of the sixteenth century was not analytical. The waving of an emblem or the muttering of a catch-word was enough. In Ulster the religious motive produced, if not open enthusiasm, at all events an incentive strong enough to bind the people together in a common cause against the new English forms of government. And so it came about that—at first half-heartedly, but later on with more ardour—the down-trodden and deluded Ulster proletariat ranged itself in the name of God on the side of those who were fighting to crush its new-born liberties.

The religious atmosphere in which the selfish designs of the chiefs was thus shrouded had naturally the full approval of the Vatican. A priest of the name of Magauran was nominated by the Pope Roman Catholic Primate of all Ireland, and, in the earlier stages of the rebellion, this militant cleric gave a fine theatrical touch to the movement by arraying himself in mail armour from head to heel, and from the back of a white charger proclaiming a Holy War, the extirpation of heresy and the speedy interference of Spain in the interests of the true faith. Magauran's holy mission was, however, pre-

maturely cut short by the very force which he had imprudently invoked. In June, 1593, just at the time when his fabled Spanish army should have been arriving, he and a party of the Maguires were caught in Connaught by some of Sir Richard Bingham's people, and a seuffle ensued in which Magauran and six or seven others were killed. The religious idea, however, had by this time taken a firm hold of the popular imagination, and from the propaganda point of view Magauran's mission had not been wholly in vain.

CHAPTER XVII

The rebellious chiefs show caution—Execution of Maguire—Suspicion of understanding between Bingham and Maguire—Tyrone's riches—Siege of the Blackwater Fort—Fitzwilliam bids Maguire disband his forces—Maguire defies him—Tyrone and Bagenal ordered to attack—Bagenal marches out of Newry—Suspected double-dealing of Tyrone—Capture of Connor Roe's cattle—Tyrone explains—Battle of Belleek—Courageous conduct of Capt. Lee—Ignominious flight of Maguire—Bagenal and Tyrone wounded—Siege of Enniskillen—Its capture—Randall McNess offers assistance on behalf of Angus McDonnell—Angus is in consequence raided by Brian McCart—Capture of Bagenal's horses—Timidity of the rebel chiefs—Loftus, Gardiner and St. Leger form a court of inquiry—Their meeting with Tyrone and Hugh Roe—Astonishing results—Recommendations of the Commissioners in favour of Tyrone—Disastrous consequences of the Government's weakness—O'Hanlon and Maguire join the rebels—Continued loyalty of Tirlough Luineach—His offers of assistance—Capt. Merriman is sent to bring him to Dublin—Death of Tirlough Luineach.

THE rebellion materialized very slowly. All the chiefs concerned, with the exception of Maguire, exercised a caution which, in the circumstances, seemed extreme; and it can hardly be doubted that, with any Deputy other than Fitzwilliam on the Vice-Throne, the rebellion would never have got beyond the preliminary stages. Fitzwilliam, however, was a man of whom all things were possible except honest dealing in the interests of his sovereign. Tyrone (while he was still posing as a loyal servant of Elizabeth) accused both him and Bagenal of taking bribes from Maguire, and Sir Geoffrey Fenton endorsed the accusation as far as Fitzwilliam went, but exculpated the Marshal, who was a particular friend of his.*

Where the head falls away from the path of honour, the limbs are not slow to follow. It was soon hinted that Sir Richard Bingham, too, had a secret understanding with Maguire, and there was certainly much in his subsequent behaviour on several occasions to lend colour to the suggestion. It is doubtful whether Maguire himself had much to offer, but Tyrone was certainly a very rich man, drawing from rents alone some £80,000 a year, and from Spanish sources periodical subsidies of very considerable value. What these subsidies

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 208, Part II.—16.

amounted to in the aggregate is not known, but a man named Moriarty McShce swore that by one ship alone Tyrone received £18,000 in gold and 600 barrels of powder.* It is more than probable that Maguire's bribes were secretly furnished by Tyrone, the latter being debarred by his assumed pose of loyalty from appearing personally in the matter; but no such obstacle stood in the way of his monetary relations with the members of the Dublin Bureaucracy, and it is established beyond doubt that these men were practically all in his pay. Tyrone was never afraid of spending money. He was no general, but he was a born diplomatist, and no man has ever more fully recognized the limitless power of gold judiciously directed into influential pockets. His seditious practices were common table-talk, and yet, so adroitly did he distribute his gold, that his protestations of unswerving allegiance to the Queen were—in spite of continuous evidence to the contrary—stoutly and successfully backed up by the confirmatory testimonials of every official in Dublin. The very first offensive act of the rebellion was in itself sufficient to prove Tyrone's complicity to anybody who was not wilfully blind. The Blackwater fort was invested by the Earl's favourite nephew, Brian McCart, supported by his own familiar sept, the O'Hagans. No violence was attempted against the fort itself, but none of the garrison were allowed to go out after provisions, nor was any native allowed to trade with those inside. One soldier who stole out after food was killed, and another captured and held to ransom. Captain Keyes wrote in remonstrance to Tyrone, but the Earl, though deeply sympathetic, regretted his complete helplessness in the matter, owing to the delay in the receipt of his official protection from the Deputy—a thin excuse which was hardly worthy of Tyrone's usual plausibility.

The Blackwater garrison were soon in very sore straits for food, but their final overthrow was not due to famine or to the sword, but to other causes which were the subject of much comment and of an abortive court-martial, to which reference will be made in due course.

Fitzwilliam's first dealings with the Maguire rebellion were of the very mildest order. He sent the rebels a polite request to disband their troops; to which Maguire, with equal politeness, replied from Enniskillen that his most earnest desire

* Mountjoy to Cecil, Aug. 1603.

was to disband his troops, but that he had passed them his word to retain them for six months, and that he therefore could not do so without dishonour. Moreover, he added that if he did so, without first obtaining a protection from the Deputy, it would lay him open to attacks from Sir Richard Bingham on the Connaught side. Nothing could have been more conciliatory than Fitzwilliam's acceptance of this thinly-veiled defiance. Bingham was instructed to refrain from molesting the courteous rebel, and Tyrone was asked, as a loyal subject of the Queen, to use his good offices to prevail on the misguided Maguire to disband his forces. Tyrone was quite willing to lend his services, and in July Fitzwilliam received a letter from him saying that he had seen Maguire, who agreed to disband his forces within six weeks, and—that done—to present himself in suppliant mood, and under Tyrone's escort, before the Lord Deputy. Fitzwilliam, however, was not now quite in the same affable mood, and he replied curtly that Maguire must disband all men who did not belong to his own county within twenty days, and within twenty days present himself before the Deputy, failing which, Tyrone was to attack him from the north, simultaneously with Bingham from the west. The reservation with regard to men of his own county is interesting as showing that Fitzwilliam was thoroughly conversant with the real state of affairs, which was that Maguire's chief strength lay in the Donegal men, Neil Garv, Sir John O'Dogherty and the three McSweeneys, and in the strong force of Scots which Hugh Roe had sent him under their command. He had a very small following from his own country, the greater part of which was attached to Connor Roe.

The next step in the comedy is most instructive, and, if anything could have opened Elizabeth's eyes to the part Tyrone was really playing, this should have done so. The Earl wrote to Fitzwilliam claiming that in consequence of his persuasive powers, used in the interests of the Queen, the penitent Maguire had disbanded his forces before his eyes, and would make his personal submission to the Lord Deputy before September 15th. This letter, however, was unfortunately followed almost immediately by another, which announced with much concern that the traitor Maguire had reassembled his forces, which were now once more under his banner and ripe for any

mischief.* The truth was, of course, that—acting on the advice of Tyrone—Maguire had never disbanded them at all, or at the best had dispersed them to agreed spots from which they could quickly be reassembled again. Bingham—always suspiciously friendly to Maguire—now wrote to Fitzwilliam that in his opinion Maguire was a comparatively innocent person, and that the real villain of the piece was the Earl of Tyrone. Such a statement coming from such a quarter created no little stir. The Dublin officials pooh-poohed Bingham's accusation as absurd, and in order to silence such injurious suggestions, and to give practical proof of Tyrone's stout loyalty, the Earl and Bagenal were ordered to at once attack Maguire from the north-east in combination with Bingham, who was to work up from the west. Bagenal was the first of the three to move. On October 16th he and Captain Henshaw marched out of Newry with the English bands, and were joined on the route by Sir Patrick Barnewall and by Patrick McArt Moyle, the Sheriff of Monaghan, with a considerable force of local kerne. Together the combined forces marched to Dartrey, where they encamped near the Island of Dromecaa. On the day following they captured both this island and the neighbouring island of the Roskie, where they burned Brian McHugh Oge's new house, as well as that of his brother Rory.† On the 22nd they went on to Clankelly, where they were joined by Connor Roe Maguire (the Government candidate for the Fermanagh chieftry), who was at the moment in great spirits at having just deprived his rebellious half-brother of a herd of cattle. On the 29th the army encamped close to Enniskillen Castle, which was held by a small garrison of Maguire's men. Maguire himself was obviously nervous and disinclined to fight, for at the approach of the Government forces he burned everything that was burnable except the Castle, and retired further west with his main force.

Neither Tyrone nor Bingham had so far arrived on the scene. The reason for the former's non-appearance was subsequently explained by a spy (Phelim O'Hanlan), who reported to Bingham that, throughout the 20th, the Earl had been in close consultation with Hugh Roe, Maguire himself and Neil Garv.‡

* Tyrone to Deputy, Sept. 5th, 1593.

† Capt. Henshaw to Deputy, Oct. 18th, 1593.

‡ Cal. State Papers, Vol. 172, Notes 1 and 2-23, Carew MSS., 1594-143.

a story which was afterwards corroborated by Connor Roe, who had it from a different source and communicated what he had learnt to Bingham. Following close on the heels of this consultation, and probably as a consequence of it, came the first of that series of farcical incidents with which the long drawn-out Ulster rebellion was punctuated. Connor Roe, as has just been stated, had taken many cattle from his half-brother, the rebellious Hugh Maguire. As a source of food supply for the Government forces these cattle would have been most welcome, but food for the Government forces they were never destined to become, for on the 24th Connor Roe reported in much distress that his trusted ally, the Earl of Tyrone, had taken all his prey from him, and had disappeared with it into his own country.* This transaction, even on the bare face of it, was farcical enough; but there is reason to suspect that the comical element extended even further than was apparent on the surface, for it was hinted on all sides that Connor Roe—though the Government candidate for the chieftainry of Fermanagh, and though brimful of verbal loyalty—was trying to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds, and was a party to the whole transaction.

The loss of this much-needed meat supply left the expeditionary force sadly short of food, which was doubtless Tyrone's intention. That slippery intriguer's explanation of the whole occurrence was very characteristic. This is what he wrote to Bagenal, the joint commander of the force with himself: "Yesterday I sent several Companies into Connor Roe's country, which took 400 or 500 cows, and my force is so dispersed, every man going away with his spoil, as I know I shall not have them together this two or three days towards Clogher. Perhaps some of Connor Roe's creaghts" (*i.e.*, droves of cattle) "may have been taken this morning by my men, and now that I perceive that he and his goods are so protected I will do him no hurt."† It need scarcely be added that the intercepted prey never reappeared. Tyrone himself, with 200 horse, 500 Scots‡ and 100 kerne, put in a warlike appearance on the 26th, but he was obviously nervous, and sat the whole

* Carew MSS., 1594-143.

† Tyrone to Bagenal, Oct. 1593.

‡ It must be kept in mind that all these events were prior to Tyrone's rejection of Angus McDonnell's daughter

of that night on his horse in fear of a surprise attack by Maguire.

The military position now was that the Government forces were on the north side of Lough Erne and Maguire on the south, and the difficulty was as to the passage of the Lough, which at this point is more in the nature of a spread-out river than of a lake. As provisions were growing scarce, and as the present position promised an interminable deadlock, Bagenal, on October 2nd, offered Tyrone all the horse and one company of foot, if he would hold the camp while Bagenal himself with the rest of the foot, went round by the Brenny (Cavan), with a view to taking Maguire in flank. To this proposition Tyrone offered every objection possible, putting forward as his excuse that the forces assigned him would not be nearly strong enough to resist Maguire if attacked;* and there can be no question but that he was very seriously alarmed. So that scheme was abandoned. Bagenal was now in a certain difficulty, as the original plan of campaign had been entirely upset by the unaccountable non-appearance of Bingham, who should have been in touch with Bagenal many days back. Bingham's conduct, in fact, at this juncture is not easily explained, except on the supposition—strongly suggested by evidence from many quarters—that he had some secret understanding with Maguire. On the 27th he had written to the Deputy from the Abbey of Boyle that he was gradually working up from Connaught with a force of horse—mainly Irish—but that he was delayed by the non-arrival of the Earl of Thomond, whom he was expecting. However, when the Earl of Thomond did ultimately join him, Bingham could get very little nearer, and on the actual day of the battle was still twelve miles off.

The battle, when it did at length take place, proved a very tame affair indeed. Bagenal and Tyrone moved down the river to the ford at Cooloyne, near Belleek. On the south side of the Lough was Maguire, strongly entrenched, with 1,000 foot and 160 horse, the greater part of whom were Hugh Roe's men. Hugh Roe himself, still posing as a neutral, was ten miles off at Ballyshannon, prudently waiting to see which way the tide of battle would set before definitely declaring himself. The tide of battle, as it turned out, set in very

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 172-30-2.

decidedly against the fortunes of Maguire. The fight itself was so one-sided as only to be redeemed from absolute comicality by the fine gallantry of one man. The infantry were ordered to enter the water and wade across, but they not unnaturally hesitated, as the enemy were fully armed with muskets, and were strongly posted both on the opposite shore and on the many intervening islands. Neither Bagenal nor Tyrone—both of whom were very far removed from heroes—showed any disposition to lead the way and inspire the men with the confidence of their example. In this crisis Captain Thomas Lee came to the front, and, entering the water alone, waved his sword above his head and made his way slowly across in the face of a heavy, but, luckily, misdirected fire.* Shamed by this heroic example, the soldiers gave a cheer and dashed into the water in pursuit of the gallant Captain. The water proved very deep, and progress was necessarily slow, but, when Lee and his foot soldiers were half-way across, Maguire's men on the islands left their posts and made hurriedly for the far shore. Here at first they stood in some order with their faces to the enemy; but on seeing the cavalry, headed by Bagenal and Tyrone, enter the water in the wake of the infantry, a panic seized them and they broke and scattered in all directions.† This was the opportunity of the horsemen, who galloped in pursuit and killed 300 of the fugitives. Both the leaders during this pursuit received hurts, Tyrone being wounded in the leg by a spear, and Bagenal being struck on the leg by a battle-axe, which fortunately fell sideways. Tyrone's hurt was the more serious of the two, and he reported that if it had not been for the intervention of Henry Hoveden, he would have lost his life. Neither of the rebel leaders, Hugh Maguire or Brian McHugh Oge, risked their skins in trying to rally their demoralized troops, but "being on horseback and not near the fight, by running away escaped, and never left off running till they came to Ennis-killen, which is almost twenty miles from the place of defeat."‡

There was a great flourish of trumpets in Government circles over this affair, which took place on October 10th, 1593. Both Bagenal and Tyrone claimed the entire credit for the victory.

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 172-3 and 4.

† Fitzwilliam to Burleigh, Oct. 1593.

‡ Deputy to Burleigh, Oct. 25th, 1593.

As a matter of fact, neither of these gentlemen added in any way to the lustre of their names by the parts they played. Tyrone was very nervous throughout, and according to the Deputy, "he made earnest motion to be gone the day before the conflict."* Henry Bagenal was never unduly prominent in the hour of battle. What really happened was that both leaders remained on the safe side of the Lough till they saw the enemy turn tail, and then crossed and joined in the pursuit. The real hero of the fight was Captain Lee, who proved himself, not only at Belleek, but on many other occasions, a man of exceptional courage.

On October 18th Bagenal recrossed the Lough by the ford at Lisgool, and, having left Captain Dowdall and 300 men at Connor Roc's house at Castleskeagh (Lisnaskea), which was the fittest place he could find for a fortification, he went on to Clones, where he disbanded his army.

In the meanwhile, Maguire's garrison still held Enniskillen Castle, and for the reduction of this place, with its forty defenders, tremendous preparations were now set on foot. Two special boats were built, one of eighteen tons and the other four tons, which were launched on the Cavan end of the Lough, and worked down towards the Castle end with provisions for Dowdall. They carried two brass falconets, and, on arrival at Enniskillen, the larger boat was sent back to bring up a culverin which was being sent up specially from Dublin.† The preparations were very protracted and tedious, but on January 25th, 1594, all was at length ready. The culverin and the two falconets were placed in position and properly aligned on the Castle. Even then, Captain Dowdall, who was an oldish man, very clearly lacking the happy optimism of youth, had serious doubts as to the behaviour of the guns under trial, for he wrote to the Deputy explaining the situation, and finishing up with the pious hope that "God will bless our cannoneers, who are of small skill." The hope was evidently realized, for on the ninth day of the siege the garrison, consisting of thirty-six men and an equal number of women and children, yielded, and Enniskillen passed into the hands of Captain Dowdall, who left in charge Captain Eekersall, with a ward of thirty men.

* Deputy to Burleigh, Nov. 16th, 1593.

† Fenton to Burleigh, Dec. 1593.

So far the success of the campaign had rested with the Government, but none of the men on the spot had any illusions as to the final result, unless the Government executive could be induced to make war preparations on a far more important scale than anything yet attempted. Burleigh was inundated with dispatches urging the great numerical strength of the rebels, the extreme weakness of the few scattered garrisons, and the disaffection of every native chief, great or small, with a solitary exception of Angus McDonnell* of the Glynns. The loyalty of the latter, however, had little political value. Angus himself seldom came to Ulster, and, since the Government had recognized him as a landed proprietor, he had removed his combative forces to Scotland. Randall McNess, his representative in Ulster, had at the utmost sixty men at his disposal, and could have given but little fighting aid to the Government even if called upon. He did his best, however, in other ways. A month after the capture of Enniskillen, Randall came into Newry and made a deposition before Bagenal, Wilbraham and Fenton.† He said that Angus had sent him because of the goodwill which he had always borne to the two Bagenals, father and son. His information was that there would come over for certain, between Easter and May, 4,000 Scots, either to Lough Foyle or Lough Swilly; that these Scots had been requisitioned jointly by Inceenduv—who kept a permanent agent, named McCleary, in Scotland for recruiting purposes—and by James McSorley, whose mother had been a sister of Shane O’Neil. He added the information that Hugh Maguire had written to Angus, offering him large tracts of land if he would bring to his aid 1,000 Scots; but Angus had refused for the reasons above given, and because of the undertaking which he had given to Perrot when he granted him the Glynns.‡ It is more than probable that Angus was open to a counter-offer from the Government, and it is quite certain that the Government could have taken no wiser course, for Angus could unquestionably have landed within a few days a force sufficient to have subdued the whole Province. Elizabeth’s prejudices, however, were not yet wholly dead, and Angus’s implied offer was disregarded. Later on, after the humiliation of his daughter by Tyrone, the

* Wilbraham to Burleigh, Sept. 1593.

† Cal. State Papers, Feb. 1594. ‡ Cal. State Papers, Vol. 173-64.

offer took a much more definite shape, but even then was put aside. On this occasion Randall was thanked by Bagenal, and so returned to the Glynnns, where he was at once raided in retaliation by James McSorley. At the same time Brian McArt and Neil McHugh (Phelim Bacagh's grandson) registered their disapproval of the whole transaction, by swooping down with 400 men on Carriekfergus, and carrying off the whole of Bagenal's stud of horses and some 200 cows, which they put across the Bann into Brian Carragh's country.* To prevent any misunderstanding as to the meaning of these unfriendly acts, Brian further threatened that, if Bagenal had any more dealings with Randall or Angus, he would come back and burn the town, a threat which was probably not beyond his power of accomplishment; for we learn that the turf rampart was much broken down at the time, and the garrison very weak numerically. Captain Egerton, the Constable, wrote representing the position to Fitzwilliam, and urging the necessity for reinforcements if the place was to be held. Fitzwilliam was not responsive, and after a time John Dallway, the Sheriff of Antrim, added his entreaties to those of Egerton,† but still without effect.

The English colony in Antrim was in truth in a position of extreme peril, for they were a mere handful in the midst of enemies, and the whole country was seething with rebellion, which might at any moment take the form of a religious massacre. Fitzwilliam's failure to send help was due, it must be owned, more to inability than to wickedness, for there were practically no reserves of strength in Ireland on which to draw, and England refused to send more men. Fitzwilliam made urgent and repeated appeals to Burleigh for fresh supplies of troops with which to relieve the extreme seriousness of the situation, but the Lord Treasurer in his turn had reasons of his own for bending the eye of suspicion on the *bona fides* of these applications, and no men were sent. Burleigh's reason for taking up this apparently unfriendly and even unreasonable attitude will presently be understood.

To the student of Tyrone's rebellion, from the mere military point of view, there is no feature of more outstanding prominence throughout, than the inexplicable timidity and hesi-

* Capt. Egerton to Deputy, March 2nd, 1594.

† Cal. State Papers. Vol. 175-85-13.

tation of the three recalcitrant Hughs at this stage of the rebellion. If Tyrone had been blest with even a moderate share of military dash, there can be no question but that he could have swept Ulster from shore to shore. The resisting force was a negligible quantity, incapable through gradual denudation of putting up more than a nominal defence. As at Carricklea, however, so did Tyrone once again bring about his own overthrow by the exercise of too great a caution. Instead of attacking, he continued to temporize with hollow protestations of loyalty, till such time as the arrival of the Spanish troops promised should have made him strong enough to throw off the mask. He would take no risks, and so in the end he lost all; for the promised Spanish force never reached Ulster, and, by the time it had reached the south of Ireland, Elizabeth had a Deputy to whom honour and loyalty stood higher than profitable traffic with the Queen's enemies. During the complacent Fitzwilliam's regime the Earl's one object was to gain time. He could look back on such a long and unbroken sequence of tractable Deputies, even within his own recollection, that it does not seem to have occurred to him that he might some day be confronted with a man to whom fighting was more congenial than intrigue. At the present moment, with a conveniently corrupt administration, everything went as he would have wished. A commission consisting of the Lord Chancellor Loftus, Sir Robert Gardiner and Sir Anthony St. Leger, was appointed by the Privy Council to inquire into the causes of the rebellion. The three Government nominees held their session in Dundalk, and from this base forwarded invitations to Tyrone and Hugh Roe to come in and confer. Maguire, being the most openly declared rebel of the three, was excluded from the invitation.

Tyrone's attitude on this occasion is interesting, as illustrating the suspicious workings of his mind, even when dealing with his own suborned confederates. Loftus was notoriously in Tyrone's pay,* and Gardiner strongly suspected of being open to the same charge, and yet the Earl evidently distrusted them both. His first step was to send Henry Hoveden to inform the Commissioners that, much as he and Hugh Roe would like to meet them, they were candidly afraid. With a view to allaying these fears, Captains Thomas Lee and Garrett

* See William Woollard to Cecil, Oct. 28th, 1595.

Moore were then sent to assure the two chiefs of the complete friendliness of the Commissioners' intentions. It is not clear whether the strong partisanship of Captain Lee for the Tyrone faction preceded this meeting, or whether it arose as the result of the meeting. Garrett Moore and his half-brother William Warren were, of course, old friends of the rebel Earl and of Hugh Roe, whose escape from Dublin Castle they had both materially assisted; but there is nothing prior to the Dundalk conference to connect Captain Lee with Tyrone's political interests. From this date on, however, there was unquestionably a very clear understanding between the two, so that it is reasonable to infer that the process of conversion was set in motion during the above-mentioned private conversation between himself, Captain Moore and the Earl.

Even after the guarantee and undertaking of the two English Captains, Tyrone's suspicions were by no means wholly allayed, and it was not till the third day that he finally agreed to a meeting. Even then he surrounded the situation with safeguards. He suggested, in the first place, that he should meet Sir Robert Gardiner alone at Sir John Bellew's house at Castle-town. Gardiner was quite agreeable, and kept the appointment, accompanied by half a dozen attendants. Even this clear evidence of friendliness did not entirely disarm the suspicions of the timid Earl, who sat for a long while on a hill a mile off guarded by a large company of horsemen;* but in the end he came to Gardiner. Tyrone spoke English better than Irish, and his command of language, whether in writing or speaking, was remarkable. He started proceedings by an outburst of weeping, and, when he had to this extent relieved his feelings, he followed it up with an impassioned exposition of his own loyalty, interspersed with bitter attacks on Bagenal. He made a great point of his own valorous behaviour at the Battle of Belleek—much questioned by others—and finally brought up the matter of Hugh Roe McMahon's execution. As to this, he explained that he, and those with him, feared that Hugh Roe's punishment was but a prelude to other similar transactions which might involve themselves, as no chief could possibly be responsible for every insignificant outrage committed by his followers. He added that, with the precedent of Hugh Roe McMahon's execution before them, there was no guarantee

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 173-89-1.

that any chief might not be seized and executed and his lands confiscated on some frivolous pretext of outrages committed by his men.

Tyrone then went and fetched Hugh Roe, whom he discreetly left alone with Gardiner, this being the common practice in the case of interviews between native chiefs and Government representatives, as experience proved that an understanding was generally arrived at quicker when there were no listeners. Unfortunately, however, for the privacy of the negotiations, it turned out that, though Hugh Roe understood English to a limited extent, he could not speak it, and the services of Sir Henry Duke as interpreter had to be called in. Hugh Roe followed very much the same lines as Tyrone, and in the end Gardiner, in a spirit of vicarious hospitality, invited the two Hughs to dine at Sir John Bellew's house. This they agreed to, but failed to keep the appointment. However, after dinner they turned up with a very large company, which included Cormac McBaron, Tirlough McHenry, Sir John O'Dogherty, Art O'Neil and his brother Cormac (Tirlough Luineach's two sons), and Henry Oge, who was Shane's grandson and one of Tyrone's very many sons-in-law. The whole party then started in the most friendly way riding towards Dundalk together, till the outskirts of the town were reached, when the O'Hagans (possibly by previous arrangement) declined to allow Tyrone to go any further. This greatly distressed the Earl, who once more shed tears, and begged that Captain Lee and Garrett Moore might ride back with him part of the way. This they were only too ready to agree to; but the O'Hagans again interfered, and threatened both Englishmen with their spears. So Tyrone and Hugh Roe rode back alone.

The astonishing results of this interview, set down in detail by Sir Robert Gardiner, who alone of the three Commissioners had any speech with Tyrone, was a recommendation signed by Loftus, Gardiner and St. Leger, that Maguire should be pardoned; that Sir Henry Bagenal's commission should be revoked, and that Captain Henshaw, the Sheriff, should be removed from the government of McNaghan;* from which it is tolerably clear that Tyrone had made the most of his opportunities while alone with Gardiner. The recommendations were not only made, they were acted upon. Maguire was

* Commissioners to Privy Council, March 16th, 1594.

officially pardoned—*i.e.*, everything that he had so far done was wiped clean off the slate. Bagenal was ordered to take no active steps against any of the three Hughs, and Henshaw's charter to make what he could out of the county of Monaghan (for which he had paid Fitzwilliam four hundred pounds) was rescinded.

Nothing could have been more disastrous than such a policy in a country where an admission of error is always attributed to weakness, and never to generosity. The concession granted gave an immediate stimulus to a rebellion which had so far hung fire rather dismally. Before the month was out, O'Hanlon and Magennis had joined the Earl, and Brian McArt (who by this time had established himself as Captain of Killultagh), with two large companies of Tyrone's men had raided Lecale, destroyed seven or eight town-lands, and "in the most cruel manner burned men, women and children in the houses."* A fortnight later Tyrone's brother Cormac and Maguire himself, galvanized into new activity by his reprieve and by the official paralysis of Bagenal and Henshaw, treated Connor Roe's country in exactly the same way. "The whole of Fermanagh is laid desolate and the people fled,"† that poor man complained to the Deputy, while strongly representing the need for English troops to be sent up to prevent Monaghan and Cavan sharing the same fate.

The process of reasoning which interprets conciliatory measures into an incentive to rebellion is extremely simple, though difficult of comprehension to the Anglo-Saxon mind. The train of thought is that a Government which makes concessions must be weak, otherwise it would not make the concessions. On the heels of this follows the idea that because it is weak it ought to be attacked. It is an eminently crude form of reasoning, very little removed above the first law of natural selection, the law which prompts the brute creation to attack the sick and wounded. The main aim of the laws of chivalry, chiefly associated with the Middle Ages, was to combat this primitive impulse, and to establish in its place a code more in tune with the higher tenets of Christianity. Chivalry took its firmest hold in France and England, and in the latter country its survival is still to be found in the code

* Bagenal to Deputy, March 28th, 1594.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 175-5-15.

of fair play which governs the actions of all classes alike ; but to many other nationalities the code of chivalry is quite unintelligible and seems a stupid neglect of opportunity.

Tyrone himself was by no means free from the general contagion. Two thousand of his men, under Cormac McBaron, laid siege to Eckersall in Enniskillen, and, for fear that this large force might run short of provisions, Henry Oge carried off three hundred of Sir Henry Duke's best cattle from Clones for their use.

In the very serious crisis which the criminal weakness of the Government had now aroused, old Tirlough Luineach came nobly forward with the offer of his house at Strabane for Her Majesty's use, and with the further offer to once more take the field, and to reduce the whole of Ulster to obedience, if the Queen would make him certain concessions and allowances in the way of troops. A few years earlier the task might have been within his compass, but he was now no longer the O'Neil, having in the previous May resigned the title (under some pressure) in favour of Tyrone. He was also getting old and broken in health, and his offer was not taken seriously. Russell seems to have had as pronounced a liking for Tirlough Luineach as had his predecessor, and in the summer of 1595, at the old man's earnest request,* Captain Merriman, an old friend, and one hundred men were sent round to the Foyle in Her Majesty's ship *Popinjay*, with instructions to bring Tirlough Luineach round by sea to Dublin, there to spend his last remaining days in peace and comfort,† for he was quite past the journey by land. He was very pleased to get the men, for all others had now deserted him, and his son Art was at the moment conspiring to betray his Castle at Strabane into Tyrone's hands ; but he never made the voyage to Dublin, for, before he could embark, he had set out on his last and longest journey. He died in September of the same year, and was buried at Ardstraw on the River Derg. He left a name unstained by a single recorded act of treachery or a single broken promise. He was beyond doubt a good warrior when sufficiently aroused to activity, but his love of wine paralysed both his energies and his ambitions, and left him an easy prey to his worthless relations. There have been many worse men.

* Tirlough Luineach to Deputy, March 31st, 1595.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 180-53.

CHAPTER XVIII

Severe straits of the Enniskillen garrison—Sir Henry Duke dispatched with a relief force—His defeat by Cormac McBaron—Fitzwilliam recalled—His indignation at the charges levelled against him—Difficult position of the Queen's Deputies—Sidney's money losses—Mountjoy's losses—Reasons for Fitzwilliam's corrupt dealings—Sir William Russell arrives as Deputy—Tyrone visits him in Dublin—Compact entered into with Tyrone—Tyrone's character—His failure to carry out his side of the agreement—Russell's energy—His relief of Enniskillen—Miserable plight of the English garrisons in Ulster—Desertion of the Carrickfergus garrison—The Bishop of Down and Connor saves the situation—Military incapacity of the rebel leaders—Their internal quarrels—Owen Roe and Brian McArt—Murder of Ever McRory Magennis—The motives at the back of it—Capture of the Blackwater Fort by Art McBaron—Suspicious conduct of the garrison—Trial by court-martial—Acquittal of the officers—Tyrone openly proclaims himself a rebel—He destroys the Blackwater Bridge and burns the Farney churches.

THE chief matter of military interest during the summer of 1594 was the siege of Enniskillen, which dragged on month after month. Its capture from the rebels had been a momentous affair. Its recapture by them was even more so. By July the number of the besieging force had reached three thousand. Within the walls the original number of the garrison had been much reduced by sickness, and provisions were at so low an ebb that it was generally recognized that the Castle must either be very speedily revictualled or lost. The work of relief was entrusted to Sir Henry Duke and Sir Edward Herbert. They both protested to the Deputy that the force at their disposal (six hundred foot and forty-six horse) was quite insufficient for the purpose; but their representations were not favourably received, and, as time was a factor of the very first importance, the attempt was made. It proved a most calamitous affair. The relieving force was attacked by a large body of Scots under Cormac McBaron, and completely defeated. Fifty-six were killed and sixty-nine wounded, and all the provisions destined for Enniskillen fell into the hands of the rebels.*

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 175-47-1.

This disastrous affair was practically the last act of Fitzwilliam's administration. Where every enterprise undertaken ended in loss to the Queen and profit to the rebels, it became clear to those at home that something must be wrong, and the Deputy was recalled. How very wrong things really were did not transpire till later, when Kyffin's investigations brought to light, among other things, the astounding fact that the Queen's English Army in Ireland existed only on paper. The muskets sent over for its armament were sold to the rebels, while the funds sent over for its pay were divided up between the Master of the Musters and the Captains of Companies, the soldiers meanwhile dying like flies of starvation and want of clothing in the public highways.

The most curious fact in connection with Fitzwilliam's recall is that he was nominally brought home because of his supposed hostility to Tyrone. Elizabeth, in a long letter to the new Deputy, Sir William Russell, distinctly makes this statement,* putting forward as her justification for the removal of his predecessor his alleged bias and that of Sir Henry Bagenal against the Earl. The Earl, of course, was not yet technically a rebel; and, though it was a matter of common knowledge all over Ireland that he was the wire-puller at the back of the whole rebel movement, Elizabeth still clung to the belief that a man on whom she had expended so much money and care, must be on a higher level of loyalty than his enemies would have her believe. Tyrone, for his part, persistently affirmed that all the major misdeeds attributed to him were the fruit of misrepresentation, and that his admittedly equivocal attitude on one or two notable occasions had been forced upon him by the fixed hostility of Fitzwilliam and Bagenal. Elizabeth was only too ready to believe all this plausible stuff, to which Fitzwilliam's notorious malpractices in Monaghan and Fermanagh gave some colour, and her inclination in the matter was strongly backed by the representations of Fenton, Loftus and Gardiner, and other members of the Tyrone faction in Dublin.

So Fitzwilliam went back to England to be arraigned in course of time for his many misdeeds, as to which he still continued to urge his innocence. "Sir," he wrote to Cecil, "you will find me an honest man, and void of all the detestable suggestions made against me."†

* Carew MSS., 1594-138

† Fitzwilliam to Cecil, Sept. 13th, 1594.

Before wholly condemning this fat, gouty old man, it must be borne in mind that he was to a great extent the victim of the demoralizing system under which the Irish Deputies were paid for their services. The strictly honest ones came away poorer men than they went. "Three times," Sir Henry Sidney had written to Walsingham, "Her Majesty hath sent me her Deputy into Ireland. I returned from each of these three deputations three thousand pounds poorer than I went." These losses of Sidney's were due, on one occasion at any rate, to special misfortune, for in 1566 the ship which was bringing over his plate and most of his worldly possessions went to the bottom in a storm; but, taking them all round, they represented the certain reward of straight dealing in Ireland. Mountjoy, the only other honest Elizabethan Deputy—if we except Lord Burgh—complained that he was between £5,000 and £6,000 in debt by the end of 1602—*i.e.*, after less than three years of office. He was allowed £5,000 a year, and spent £2,000 a year of his own money in addition.

Fitzwilliam himself, we are told, lost £2,000 during his first experience of Dublin office life, a catastrophe which so disgusted him with the paths of honesty that he determined at his next opportunity to steer a widely different course. To this resolve may be traced all the strange vagaries of his later administration. He was underpaid, and expected by a niggardly Treasury to squeeze the balance of his salary out of the country he governed. The insanity of such a system is self-evident. "Pay yourself," Elizabeth suggested to her Deputies, "but don't pay yourself too much." Angels might respond to such a test, but not mere men. Fitzwilliam paid himself, and, having once taken his farewell of honest dealing, saw no particular reason for adopting half-measures. During his second term of office he was reported to have cleared £10,000, a by no means impossible figure when we consider the methods adopted. "He was not clean-handed from excèses and other impositions, which were his greatest faults," says the "Book of Howth," "and that was a pity, for he was a good man saving for that."*

On August 11th the new Deputy, Sir William Russell, the youngest son of the Earl of Bedford, arrived to take up the very tangled reins of Government. Tyrone, it need scarcely

* "Book of Howth," p. 202.

he said, at once went up to Dublin to pay his respects, and, incidentally, to try and arrive at some such comfortable understanding as he had already established with the majority of the Privy Council. Russell, however, had arrived armed with some of the proverbial enthusiasm of the new broom, and proved by no means the easy prey that the Earl had anticipated.

Tyrone entered the room on his knees and presented a most beautifully-worded and appealing submission, which, as a work of art, was accorded proper respect, but which, as a promise of things to come, made little impression. Russell was no fool. He assessed Tyrone's pathetic protestations at their true value, and, had he followed his own judgment, he would then and there have proclaimed the Earl rebel and traitor. Fenton, however, and, in fact, the entire Privy Council were—as may easily be imagined—very strongly opposed to this course, recommending in preference those temporizing measures which are ever so dear to the heart of the true politician.* Russell finally yielded to what he considered their greater experience of the country. It was arranged that Tyrone was to return in peace to Ulster, and to send his eldest legitimate son, Hugh Baron of Dungannon, to be educated at his own expense at Dublin University, the building of which had just been completed. He was also to take immediate steps to re-embark and send back to Scotland the two large bands of Highlanders which Ineenduv and James McSorley had recently imported (in fulfilment of Angus McDonnell's prediction). He was further to induce Hugh Roe to send away all his previously-hired Scots, and they were both to refrain from any further molestation of Her Majesty's subjects.† To all these terms Tyrone agreed, with all the readiness of one to whom promises were merely a convenient form of words.

The Queen was very greatly displeased with Russell for having allowed the Earl to go free, after having been securely within his grasp. Obstinate as her belief may have been in the ultimate regeneration of the English-reared O'Neil, she was too true a Tudor to leave that to chance which the walls of the Tower would have made sure of. Russell excused himself on the grounds given above. He himself, he pleaded, was new to the situation, and those who had experience of the

* Fynes Moryson, Part II., Chapter II

† Carew MSS., Aug. 1594.

country had unanimously recommended the course which he had adopted.

It is not always easy, at this period of his career, to read the Earl of Tyrone aright, so that it is not to be wondered at that Elizabeth herself was puzzled. At times he appears as a crafty and unscrupulous schemer, lost to all sense of honour, and at others as a mere nonentity—a feeble creature used as a cat's-paw by firmer minds than his. He was probably a combination of the two. There is no doubt that he was markedly deficient in the firmness of character usually associated with successful leaders of revolutions. In all the more serious crises of his career we find him vacillating weakly between two alternative courses. The O'Hagans would appear to have had little respect for, and no fear of, him. They regarded him rather as a kind of sacred effigy—the focus-point of their rude religious cult; but they ordered him about as they chose, and were completely out of his control.* In spite of the ridicule with which Robert Earl of Essex regarded his religious pose, there seems very little doubt that, at this period of his career, superstition played a considerable part in the moulding of his plans. In a letter which Russell wrote to Burleigh in November, 1594, he describes him as being wholly governed by Jesuits and seminary priests. Of these, the most influential at the moment was an English Jesuit of the name of Francis Mountfort. Tyrone appears to have discussed with this man the question of sending the Baron of Dungannon to Dublin University, and there is the possibility that the idea may not have been without its attractions for a man who, in his more exuberant moments, aimed at being king of Ireland; but Mountfort peremptorily vetoed it. So here was the death of the Earl's first promise. The second promise was probably in any case beyond his powers of accomplishment. There is no instance on record of his having directed any of his retainers into paths which they did not wish to follow, or of his having punished any of them for exceeding his commands. Donough O'Hagan, it is true, was seen in 1596 lying in irons in Dungannon Castle, from which it might be *prima facie* inferred that Tyrone had imprisoned him there; but there is a strong probability that his judge and jury, on this occasion,

* The O'Hagans were a sept who claimed royal descent and were, in any case, of a lineage as old as the O'Neils.

had been his own sept and not the Earl. In view of the strained relations existing at the moment between Tyrone and the Scots, it is highly improbable that he even went through the farce of attempting to turn them back; but in any event they did not go. Three thousand were reported to have landed in Inishowen to the order of Inceenduv, and three thousand in the Route for James MeSorley.* These figures were no doubt greatly exaggerated, but that the number actually landed was considerable is beyond doubt, as is also the fact that the Route contingent brought with them five hundred pounds' worth of powder and shot, which had been shipped from Glasgow for the use of the Earl by one James Stewart.† Tyrone's excuse to the Deputy for the non-fulfilment of his pledge was a plain plea of impotence,‡ which was no doubt the true explanation, though it by no means follows that he would have exercised the power, even had it been his. Russell had been wise enough not to build too much on the fulfilment of the fickle Earl's promises, and, from the moment of his taking over office, he commenced vigorous preparations for the relief of the beleaguered Enniskillen garrison. The energy of his actions must have come as a surprise to the rebel chiefs, and they certainly offered proof of his initial desire to serve his Queen well and truly. He had landed on August 11th, and within ten days of that date he had set out from Dublin with the relieving force. On August 30th the Castle was reached, and the garrison of fifteen, now reduced to eating cats and rats, was rescued from a position which could hardly have been longer endured, and a new garrison was properly provisioned and left in charge. Of this new garrison not one was destined to leave Enniskillen alive.

If ever there was a moment when Tyrone should have struck it was during the autumn of 1594. He had now some six thousand or seven thousand good troops at his disposal, with an abundance of arms and ammunition. The Government forces, on the other hand, were miserably depleted, and the gaps had been filled up with Irish kerne, who were quite unreliable in emergency. Most of the minor Ulster strongholds

* Tyrone to Privy Council, July 25th, 1594. See also Laurence Esmond to Deputy, July 29th, 1594.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 178-42.

‡ Tyrone to Deputy, Sept. 11th, 1594.

were in the rebel hands. The only places which were still precariously held for the Queen were Newry, Monaghan, the Blackwater Fort, Enniskillen and Carrickfergus, and the last-named—which was still by far the most important military station in Ulster, though dangerously isolated and remote—could, by the admission of its Mayor, Michael Savage, have made no effective resistance against a determined attack.* Luckily for the inmates no such attack was made. In August James McSorley, who had by now dispossessed McQuillin of every acre he had ever owned in the Route, came down with one thousand of his newly-imported Scots, and carried off all their cattle, the garrison being too weak even to attempt a rescue. The loss of their food supply was the last straw that broke down the patience of the long-suffering garrison. They had received no pay for five years, and now their sole means of subsistence had been carried off under their very noses, and they themselves left to starve. They took up their arms and left the town in a body, but were afterwards persuaded to return by John Charden, Bishop of Down and Connor, who met them near Kilroot on their way to Larne, and supplied their immediate wants with some of his own cattle. Except for this one unimportant foraging enterprise, the autumn of 1594 was allowed to pass without any active movement being attempted by Tyrone or any of his allies.

The truth was that none of the rebel leaders, with the exception of Maguire, had any military capacity, or even a knowledge of the first principles of warfare, in the sense of concerted movements with a distinct strategical aim. Their ideas were limited to the conduct of predatory raids, which may have been satisfactory from the point of view of commissariat or revenge, but which had no military value.

Another difficulty in the way of concerted and systematized movements was the impossibility of sustaining harmony for any length of time between the rebel leaders, who almost invariably quarrelled among themselves before they came within reach of the enemy. The first Ulster notability to realize that the art of war and the aims of war extended beyond mere pillage and massacre, was the famous Owen Roe O'Neil, but then he had learned in a foreign school.

Owen Roe was half-brother to Brian McArt, and was con-

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 175-35-14.

sequently a nephew of the Earl of Tyrone—a rather remarkable relationship when we consider that Tyrone was born in the forties of the sixteenth century, and that Owen Roe was commander-in-chief of the Irish forces in the forties of the seventeenth century. The seventeenth-century nephew, however, was a very different man to the sixteenth-century uncle, though the two had this in common, that they were both singularly free from the common blood-thirst of their associates. Tyrone was never a butcher. He killed without scruple or hesitation where his personal safety or his political aims demanded it, but he never killed for the mere sake of killing. He killed Ever McRory Magennis, the Captain of Kilwarlin, in this very autumn of 1594. The act was one of sheer murder judged by conventional standards, and for some little time Tyrone's motive for what on the surface seemed an unprovoked outrage, remained a matter of doubt. Bagenal wrote to Burleigh that Ever had been murdered because "he had certain matters to aver against Tyrone face to face";* but this was not the real truth. The true facts of the case were communicated by William Lane to Cecil in a letter dated July 18th, 1597. "Many minor chiefs," he wrote, "are ready to surrender their lands and to receive them again in perpetuity from Her Majesty, paying so much rent, but all such offers are suppressed by the officials (local) for their own ends. For now they (and others) receive many cows a year to countenance the chiefs' holdings, whereas in the other case only Her Majesty would receive rent. This course would do more than any other to settle the country; therefore Tyrone dreads it more than anything else. He killed Ever McMahan, Captain of Killultagh, for making such an offer."†

Lane was at fault as to the names, but right as to the circumstances. No McMahan was ever Captain of Killultagh, which was far removed from the McMahan country. The Captain of Killultagh was Cormac McBrian, who was also murdered (by Brian McArt), but for no more subtle political reason than that Brian, being landless himself and without any fixed habitat, wanted Killultagh as a base from which to terrorize Kilwarlin, Dufferin and McCartan's country to the west. This matter, however, has no bearing on the present

* Bagenal to Burleigh, Sept. 27th, 1594.

† William Lane to Cecil, July 18th, 1597.

case. The man to whom Lane intends to refer, as having been killed by Tyrone, was Ever McRory Magennis, Captain of Kilwarlin, and he was killed because he had made an offer to surrender Kilwarlin* (Lower Iveagh) and receive it again from the Queen.

In January the rebellion began to give signs of increased activity. Maguire opened the year well by capturing the big 18-ton boat on Loch Erne—a serious loss to the garrison. Worse misfortunes were to follow. On February 16th Art McBaron and Art Bradagh O'Hagan (Tyrone's principal military leader) achieved the capture of the Blackwater Fort. This was the most important gain the rebels had yet been able to register, for the position was one of supreme importance, and one that had been held without break throughout the twenty years that had elapsed since its first establishment by Essex. The two victorious Arts behaved with remarkable moderation to the garrison, who were allowed to go their ways with whole skins—a circumstance so rare in sixteenth-century warfare as to give rise to much comment and inquiry. The capture of this fort, which was the main gateway into the county of Tyrone, and its occupation by the O'Hagans, decided the timid Earl to at last declare himself openly on the side of the rebels. On receipt of the glad news, he galloped with all speed to the river, and personally supervised the demolition of the hated bridge, which opened his territory to inquisitive interference from the Pale.

The Queen was naturally very much upset by the loss of the Blackwater, and highly suspicious of the rather curious circumstances surrounding its transfer into rebel hands. Both Captain Keyes—who had been absent on the occasion—and his second in command, Lieutenant Cornwall, were imprisoned and tried by court-martial on the charge of having betrayed the fort to the rebels for their own personal ends. The evidence of all the surviving members of the garrison was taken,† but as all were presumably equally implicated, nothing was proved; and the two officers were acquitted by a court whose members foresaw the possibility that they themselves might some day be in the dock on a similar charge.

Tyrone, having now openly declared himself on the side of

* See also Bagenal to Burleigh as above.

† See deposition of Henry Marsh, Cal. State Papers, Vol. 178-53.

Maguire, was anxious to lose no time in proving to his comrades in rebellion how thoroughly he had turned his coat. He started proceedings by personally conducting a raid against Cavan, which he burned, and followed this up by burning all the churches in Farnely—the property of the Earl of Essex—not so much from religious zeal as because the churches, being built of stone, were easily convertible into fortresses in war-time.

CHAPTER XIX

Distress of Elizabeth at Tyrone's open rebellion—Precarious condition of the English garrisons in Ireland—Russell's military capacity—Dispatch of Sir John Norris with reinforcements—Russell made subordinate to Norris—His magnanimous spirit—Capture of Enniskillen by the rebels—Norris's army reaches Newry—The relief of Monaghan—Relief column harassed by Tyrone—Casualties on both sides—Tyrone publicly proclaimed traitor—Norris reaches the Blackwater—Panic of Tyrone—He burns Dungannon Castle—Tyrone burns the Newry flour-mills—Capture of Magennis's cattle—Government force attacked in the Moyerie Pass—Narrow escape of Russell.

THE definite association of Tyrone with the Ulster rebellion came as a surprise to no one in Ireland, where it had long been known that the Earl was the semi-concealed wire-puller at the back of the movement. A pretence of belief in his loyalty had been kept up for business reasons, but the real position had been public property for years. In England, however, it was otherwise. The persistent guarantees by the Privy Council of the Earl's basic loyalty had fallen happily in line with the Queen's eternal hopes that the boy she had befriended would—in spite of appearances to the contrary—in the end prove himself worthy of her confidence. These hopes were now definitely shattered, and the disillusioned Queen became no less anxious than was Burleigh to bring her ungrateful fosterling to justice.

Repeated representations had been made to Burleigh for some time past, both by Fitzwilliam and Russell, as to the gravity of the situation developing in Ulster, and more particularly as to the desperate condition of the few slender garrisons that still held out. The Queen's belated belief in Tyrone's loyalty had hitherto, to a certain extent, discounted these warnings, but, after the Blackwater affair, it was impossible for those in England any longer to doubt their true value. The English Council became keenly alive to the urgent need for energetic action. Russell's last word had been that nothing could save Ulster except the immediate embarkation of a strong

force under a commander of proved capacity. He little guessed at the time he put forward this recommendation of the complications he was inviting. Burleigh fell in with the suggestion all the more readily from the fact that he himself had long been contemplating some such step. He had already determined not to send any more dribbles of men over to Ireland, having a strong suspicion, and, indeed, something more than a suspicion, that the depletion of the garrisons in that country was not wholly due to military causes. There happened to be a force very suitable for the Irish undertaking engaged at the time in Brittany, under the command of Sir John Norris, and Burleigh's final decision, on receipt of Russell's recommendation, was to wait till that force was disengaged, and then to send it over to Ireland, as an integral unit, under its present commander. Burleigh's decision, though it was practically in accord with Russell's own request, and though it certainly offered a partial solution of the problem of Irish reinforcements, was destined to provoke many more complications than it solved. Russell, who was himself a man of considerable military experience, and who bore the reputation of having displayed remarkable personal prowess in the Netherlands wars, had neither desired nor anticipated that the capable commander he had applied for should be made independent of his own authority. Nor had he anticipated that the man selected would be Sir John Norris, who was an old enemy of his own in other fields. Even so, however, the situation might have been productive of good, had Burleigh not adopted the unprecedented course of placing Norris in supreme command of the army of Ulster, to the obliteration of Russell. It was a humiliation which Russell, so far, had not deserved, and it must be recorded to his undying credit that he accepted the affront (for it was nothing less) in a spirit of unshaken loyalty to his Queen. A man of less generous disposition might have sulked at home and taken no further interest in the suppression of the rebellion. Russell, however, played a very different part. No sooner had Norris's army landed than he met the new Commander-in-Chief in a spirit of friendly cordiality, accompanied him to Newry, and for some weeks afterwards lent the encouragement of his presence to all the movements of the camp.

Contrary to general expectation, the delay in the dispatch of reinforcements had only resulted in the loss to the Govern-

ment of one more stronghold. This was Enniskillen. The loss of the big boat had, in point of fact, already sounded the knell of this place, and early in May, 1595, the garrison—now reduced by absolute famine to fourteen—surrendered to Cormac McBaron. The Four Masters say that the fourteen were honourably pardoned, but Russell, on the other hand, states distinctly, in two separate letters, that they were all put to the sword.* Newry, Monaghan and Carrickfergus now alone remained, and the position of the last two was precarious in the extreme. Monaghan lacked for food and Carrickfergus for defences. Once again, however, the hopeless lack of co-ordination among the rebels prevented them from taking advantage of their opportunities, and the relieving force was allowed to arrive with Monaghan and Carrickfergus still uncaptured.

Norris landed at Waterford early in May—just prior, in fact, to the fall of Enniskillen—and made his way up, as quickly as circumstances would allow, to Dublin, and from thence to Newry, accompanied—as has already been stated—by the Lord Deputy. The army consisted of 2,200 foot, under the Commander-in-Chief's brother, Sir Henry Norris, and 500 horse, under Sir Edward Yorke. It was agreed on all sides that by far the most pressing matter at the moment was the relief of Monaghan, where Captain Dowdall was reported to be in absolute extremities. Accordingly, on May 25th the army set out from Newry for that place, accompanied by a herd of 1,000 cattle, driven by Irish kerne.

Even before the walls of Newry were out of sight, Tyrone made demonstrations on both flanks of the relieving column with an army which Bagenal, who accompanied the English force, generously estimated at 14,000,† but which in reality numbered less than a quarter of that figure. Tyrone himself was very conspicuous throughout, being surrounded by a special body of 300 personal guards in scarlet and yellow uniforms,‡ with whom he remained at a prudent distance directing operations. His army harassed the English up to the very gates of Monaghan, but he was unable to prevent the relieving and revictualling of the garrison, and the successful return of Norris's column to Newry.

* Russell to Cecil, May 23rd and May 24th, 1595.

† Fenton to Buckhurst, July 30th, 1595.

‡ Tyrone's colours were red and yellow. See Cal. State Papers, James-1625-170.

Throughout the return, as in the advance, Tyrone's force hung on the flanks of the Government column, and kept up so boisterous a fusillade that we are told that no less than fourteen barrels of powder were consumed in the effort,* but finally Newry and the welcome shelter of its walls was reached, and a count was made of the casualties. These, according to the returns furnished, amounted to 31 killed and 109 wounded, but it was freely rumoured that the actual losses were higher,† but from motives which it is not easy to understand were concealed. A man named Pat Donnelly, who was with Tyrone's force, but who afterwards turned spy, estimated the numbers of the Earl's army at 3,000 foot and 800 horse. The Irish casualties, he said, coming and going, amounted to 300, and included Tirlough Luineach's son Cornac and Art Bradagh O'Hagan, both of whom had been killed. The last two statements, however, proved to be pure fiction, invented for the purpose of pleasing his audience.

The prominent part played by Tyrone in the attack on Norris's column was at once a public declaration of the side he was on and an open defiance of the Government, and there was no longer any hesitation as to the course which the situation demanded. Accordingly, on June 23rd he was officially proclaimed a traitor, and notices to this effect, in both English and Irish, were posted in Newry market-place. The rather curious reason assigned for this proclamation was that Tyrone had hanged Hugh McShane, the object being, of course, to detach the Donnellys and other adherents of the Shane faction from the standard of the Earl; but, as the event in question had taken place six years before the proclamation, it is hardly likely that so quick-witted a people as the Irish were for a moment deceived. The truth, of course, was that, from the moment of Tyrone's first interview with Russell, he had realized that the old game of pretended loyalty, which he so successfully carried on for many years, was at an end, and that nothing remained for him but to make open cause with Maguire.

At the end of June Norris, having garrisoned Armagh Great Church and turned it into a temporary store-house for passing troops, pushed on to the Blackwater, the Deputy still accompanying the force. The river was found in full flood and quite impassable, and on the far bank was the Earl with the

* Carew MSS., 1595-154.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 180-5-6.

whole of his considerable force. According to a contemporary "Journal of the Deputy's Northern Journey," a great many railing speeches were exchanged across the water, but no shots,* each party being anxious to conserve its powder for more important occasions.

The sight of Norris's army, even on the far side of the flooded river, seems to have filled the newly-declared rebel with a quite unreasonable terror. In the panic which possessed him he burned all the houses on the western side of the river, including those of the McCanns, O'Hagans and O'Quins, and then—as though to show his impartiality in the matter—burned his own castle at Dungannon† with all its new London appurtenances, and laid the smouldering ruins flat with the ground. Not content with this, he sent frantic messages north and west to Hugh Roe, O'Cahan and Tirlough Luineach, announcing that all was lost, and bidding them burn all their Castles without a moment's delay. The two first-named chiefs—in the same spirit of panic—carried out his orders literally, but Tirlough Luineach was at his last gasp and cared for none of these things.

Even when the short summer flood had subsided, Norris made no attempt to push forward beyond the Blackwater, and Tyrone—in an excess of spleen at having needlessly destroyed so much of his own property—made an effort to level things up, to a certain extent, by sweeping round behind the Government forces with 800 horse and burning Bagenal's flour mills at Newry.‡ Having relieved his mind to this extent, he next rounded up 1,500 of Sir Hugh Magennis's cattle in Iveagh, which he sent home under escort, while he himself turned south in search of fresh opportunities for punishing those who (like Magennis) had not yet joined him, and for generally annoying the English army.

The burning of the Newry flour mills did not come altogether as a surprise. Norris had learned through his spies of Tyrone's intention, and in the forlorn hope that he might prevent the catastrophe, or at any rate catch Tyrone in the act, he hurried his army back by the shortest cut to Newry, which was reached on July 10th. By that time, however, the smouldering ruins

* Carew MSS., 1595-158.

† Russell to Burleigh, July 4th, 1595. Russell to Privy Council, July 20th, 1595.

‡ Carew MSS., 1595-158.

of the mills were the only trace left of the mobile Earl, and, after two days spent in gloomily reviewing the damage and reckoning up the cost of reconstruction, the army continued its southward march to Dundalk.

This stage of the journey very nearly resulted in a serious disaster to the English, and without doubt would have done so, had Tyrone and his light horse been possessed of even a moderate degree of daring. A very carefully prepared ambush was laid in the narrowest part of the dangerous Moyeric Pass between Newry and Dundalk, into which the English advance party, which included Russell himself, marched without a suspicion of its presence. The Irish luckily failed to take proper advantage of this stroke of good fortune, for, after firing a single volley—which only succeeded in hitting one man, Sir Oghie O'Hanlon, in the foot—they flung away their arms and made off into the bogs and woods* where pursuit was impossible. The main body, hearing the firing, hurried up and made an attempt at pursuit, but the light-footed Irish knew the ground and easily out-distanced their pursuers. "If such a running away," the Journalist of the occurrence writes, "had been in France or Flanders, either of the French King's army or the King of Spain, the mightier of them could not have shown themselves again in the field within one year following."†

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 181-41.

† Carew MSS., 1595-158.

CHAPTER XX

Official corruption in Ireland—Norris's unaccountable inaction—Russell's attempts to import a Scotch army—Opposition of Fenton—Offer of assistance from Angus and Donald Gorm—Reluctance of the officials to end the war—Fenton's arguments against the use of Scots—The Queen persuaded—Scotch army lands on the Copeland Islands—Angus's renewed offers of service—Reluctant refusal of Russell—Peace negotiations opened with Tyrone—Norris, Fenton and Bouchier appointed commissioners—Three months' truce—Release of Randall McSorley—Tyrone's letters to Spain—Tyrone submits his terms—The Queen's amendments—Seizure of Monaghan by Cormac McBaron—Treachery of Patrick McArt Moyle—Tyrone's attempts on Dundrum and Strangford—Wallop and Gardiner interview Tyrone—Grievances of the chiefs—Queen's proclamation of pardon—Disagreement between Tyrone and Hugh Roe—Final terms agreed with Tyrone—Russell's sarcastic comments—Tyrone and Magennis's daughter on the Bann—Don Alonzo de Cobos arrives in Donegal—Tyrone hurries to meet him—Gathering at Lifford.

FOR so renowned a commander, Norris's first effort in the field had been singularly barren of results. He himself—following in the traditional footsteps of the unsuccessful—tried to find excuses for his failure in the shortcomings of others. "While those," he wrote to Burleigh, "who have the chiefest disposition of things, care not how long the war lasts so they may make their profit, you can look for no other success than an unprofitable expense and a lasting rebellion." Whether this thrust was aimed at Russell himself or at the Privy Council is not clear. The probability is that it was aimed at Russell, between whom and the military commander the relations were already becoming very strained. It is by no means clear, however, that—as far as the Deputy was concerned—the imputation was at that time merited. On the contrary, the evidence is in favour of Russell's intentions, at any rate during the first year of his administration, having been honest. All his first acts tend to confirm this view, but that later on he deteriorated very rapidly is no less certain. Fitzwilliam had left in Ireland a state of society in which every stratum was steeped through and through with corruption and greed. Russell arrived on the scene of his new duties full of

energy of body and mind, and of zeal in the service of his Queen. He found himself hopelessly and helplessly alone, and it was not long before he sank to the level of his surroundings. At this period it is to be doubted whether the Irish administration could boast a single honest man. Not one figure can we point to, who rises above the universal quagmire of turpitude in which all alike were sunk—not one true man on whom the eye can rest with a momentary sense of relief. In the official correspondence of the day Tyrone, Hugh Roe and Maguire are invariably referred to as “the traitors.” It was a convenient form of words in which the sycophancy of the age found expression, and it was universally adopted by men who were themselves incomparably more traitorous than those whom they thus stigmatized ; for, while the Irish chiefs were frankly rebels against an authority which they disliked, the English officials were daily and hourly betraying the interests of the Queen who paid them. Norris himself, who so readily assumed the rôle of virtuous censor, was by no means free from the general contagion. The prolonged and ignominious paralysis, which settled down on the Government army while under his direction, can only be explained by including the Commander-in-Chief in the list of Tyrone’s pensioners. Norris had greatly distinguished himself in Flanders, and was quite properly reckoned one of the first generals of the day, and yet in Ireland—though provided with abundant and veteran troops, and opposed by an enemy of mediocre quality—he was content to sit down for two years in an inglorious inaction which was only broken by farcical parleys and futile negotiations.

One of the worst features of a situation, which was ugly in all its aspects, was that Ireland could boast of no single official for whom the native chiefs had the slightest respect, or in whose word they placed any confidence. Both Tyrone and Maguire had full knowledge that all alike were cheating their Queen to the utmost limits of their opportunities. In the endless parleys, conferences and negotiations between the Government and the rebels, which followed on Norris’s northern expedition of 1595, it is hard to say which side sank to the greater depths of perfidy and fraud. Both Burleigh and Cecil had warnings in plenty of the way in which things were being carried on across the Channel, but the Queen was perhaps past her best, and it is doubtful whether all that came to their knowledge was passed

on. But that she was badly served she knew well enough, in spite of her failing powers, and even before the close of the year 1595 she had written to Russell sharply reprimanding him for the barrenness of his performances. The reprimand was not altogether just, in view of the fact that she had herself deprived him of the military command, and thereby tied his hands; but disappointed princes are not always as just as they are critical. The truth was that the Queen was very disappointed with Russell, from whom she had hoped for great things. The Lord Deputy had been very carefully chosen. Just prior to Fitzwilliam's recall, Sir George Carew had written a "Discourse on the state of Ireland," in which he said that, "although the Earl (Tyrone) is a more absolute commander in the north than was that arch-traitor Shane O'Neil, yet is it in Her Majesty's power to determine this war in a few months, and the first step towards it is to send a worthy gentleman hither to be her Deputy, that hath a sterling martial spirit and an able body."* Such a representative she thought she had found in Russell, but—having found him—she committed the fatal blunder of destroying his value by giving him only partial authority. By this foolish step his "worthiness" was in a great measure neutralized, for he was deprived of the power of giving it practical expression. It must be recorded to Russell's credit that, as soon as he had definite evidence that—for unexplained reasons—Norris was disinclined to take active measures against Tyrone, he did his best to get over an independent Scotch army who would be able to strike a blow for Her Majesty under his direct command.† It is not clear whether this idea originated with Russell, or with the Scots, but the point is not one of importance. Three times during the first two years of his administration did the Deputy write either to Burleigh or Cecil insisting upon the importance of this step being taken. "Two thousand Scots," he urged, "well assured to Her Majesty, would perform more service upon the traitor Tyrone than twice so many English."‡ The Deputy's recommendation was strongly backed in a separate letter by Bagenal, who—culpable as he may have been in other matters—was certainly honest in his hatred of Tyrone. Such repeated representations from independent sources could

* Carew MSS., 1594.

† Russell to Cecil, June 22nd, 1595.

‡ Russell to Cecil, Dec. 20th, 1595; Dec. 20th, 1595, and Oct. 8th, 1596. See also Carew MSS., 1596-261.

hardly fail of their effect, and we know that, by the end of 1596, the English Privy Council was fully persuaded of the advisability of employing a Scotch army in Ulster.* Looking back across three centuries of history, it is difficult to see how there could have been any hesitation. The Scots had few equals as fighters in the particular class of warfare demanded by the country conditions. They travelled light, fed themselves by the simple method of taking what they wanted, and could stand any amount of hardship. All this was freely admitted. The only point in debate was as to whether they were "well assured unto Her Majesty." This was a point as to which opinions differed widely. Fenton and others of the Tyronian faction stoutly affirmed that they were not, but it is to be doubted whether this advice was governed wholly by zeal for Her Majesty's interests. Russell's advice was clearly honest as far as it went. His only personal interest in the matter lay in a not unnatural desire to show that—if he had an army at his heels—he could accomplish more than Norris had with his Flanders veterans. The main argument which he put forward in support of his advice was the admitted bitterness, at the moment, of the three principal clans concerned against the Earl of Tyrone. Russell claimed that this feeling of bitterness was quite sufficient in itself to ensure the *bona fides* of the Scots, as far as the subjugation of Tyrone was concerned. Beyond that point there was naturally an element of uncertainty, but this Russell was prepared to advise the Queen to risk. Angus McDonnell, whose daughter Tyrone had just thrown back on his hands as unsuitable, was at the moment full of an offended indignation† of which appropriate advantage might well have been taken. In the heat of his indignation Angus wrote Russell a letter signed by both himself and his eldest son Donald Gorm, in which he offered to serve Her Majesty against the rebel Earl with all the force at his command. Russell passed the offer on, with strong recommendations for its acceptance, but without convincing the Queen, who was past the time of life when new ideas can be readily absorbed, or fixed ideas eradicated.

The opposition of Fenton, and of those who worked with him, to the employment of the Scots, or indeed of any other

* Cal. State Papers, Dec. 26th, 1596.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 205-100. Information of Capt. J. C.

machinery which would have had the effect of ending the war, is easily understood. So long as Tyrone and his satellitic group of minor chiefs were in nominal rebellion against the Queen, there were a thousand and one channels through which money trickled noiselessly into the pockets of the Captains of Companies, Masters of Musters, victuallers, contractors, aye, and even the high personages of the Privy Council itself. "Long live the war," was the secret toast of every Queen's officer in Ireland, while the poor Queen herself was emptying her treasury and penning stilted didactic dispatches, in the hopes of putting an end to expenses which those to whom she wrote were very fully determined should continue.

It is to be suspected that of all the Irish officials, Fenton, the Secretary, was the most pro-Tyronian. This wily permanent official, who by virtue of his fifteen years' residence in Dublin Castle exercised a controlling influence over each successive Deputy as he arrived, had naturally been the first target for Tyrone's conciliatory advances, and in all probability commanded the highest subsidy. As to the manner in which these subsidies were paid we have no exact information, but instructive glimpses are from time to time afforded us of some of the devices by which Tyrone got what he wanted. We know, for instance, that in 1585, when Perrot was in Drogheda settling the land disputes between Tyrone and Tirlough Luineach, the Earl made a present of £40 to Perrot himself and every member of his staff* (of whom Fenton was one). After reading of the above, we feel little surprise that the verdict of Perrot and his Council was in favour of the Earl. Prior to Tyrone's open defection, Fenton had for many years past earned his pay by posing as an ardent sponsor for Tyrone's loyalty, and, when that position became no longer tenable, he served his cause as far as opportunities admitted by subscribing to farcical truces and cessations, and by opposing, by every trick of argument, the employment of Scots against the rebel chiefs.

In pursuance of this last-named policy, he now set to work to counteract the effect of Russell's letters, by marshalling before the eyes of the English Council all the old familiar arguments as to the criminal imprudence of allowing the Scots to establish a firm footing in Ulster. He sounded every note of danger likely to alarm a Ministry already wearied to death

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 207-31.

of Irish troubles, reminding them of the cancerous encroachments of the Scots under Perrot and Drury, and predicting that, if once established, they would prove far more formidable foes than the Irish whom they were brought over to repress. Where sedentary politicians are concerned, negative advice has always a sweeter flavour than positive. Russell's recommendations, which had at first been so favourably received, were now put down to personal jealousy of Norris, and Bagenal's endorsement of these recommendations to personal hatred of Tyrone. Fenton's, on the other hand, were read as the grave warnings of an experienced politician, and the offers of Angus and Donald Gorm were thrown into the waste-paper basket.

None viewed this insensate rejection of a good offer with more genuine concern than that gallant soldier and true subject, Captain Williams, who was quick to realize the double danger that lay in the situation. "If Her Majesty," he wrote to the Privy Council, "does not entertain the Scots who have offered to come to Carrickfergus, Tyrone will have them if he can."* Williams was right as to Tyrone's intentions in the matter, but mercifully these intentions were never carried out, otherwise the rebellion might have had a very different ending. Five years earlier, Angus, justifiably incensed at the Queen's rejection of his good offices, might very possibly have concluded terms with Tyrone, but not after the insult that the Earl had put upon his daughter.

So the Queen, following the advice of Fenton, which fell in line with her ingrained prejudices, would have none of Angus's offer. In the meanwhile, however, an unexpected complication had arisen. Angus, making quite sure of the acceptance of an offer which he himself knew to be *bona fide*, shipped 3,000 men from Cantyre in a large flotilla of galleys. This flotilla was unfortunately sighted by Captain Thornton, who was cruising about the Channel with the old *Popinjay* and the *Charles*, and he, in a pardonable excess of zeal, opened fire and sank three of the galleys. The remainder, in much surprise at this reception, made hurriedly for the adjacent Copeland Islands, where they landed and hoisted the white flag.† Captain Thornton, who was quite at a loss to know

* Capt. Williams to Privy Council, Nov. 1st, 1597.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 182-43-1, 2, 3, and 4.

how he should deal with a situation which was outside of his experience, then also landed, and interviewed the leaders of the Scotch flotilla, who explained that their mission was by no means hostile to the Queen, but, on the contrary, aimed at helping her.* Thornton wrote to Dublin reporting the circumstances, and asking for instructions. The Scots, he explained, were chiefly Campbells and Macleans, with a sprinkling of McDonnells, and in his opinion were quite honest in their intentions of helping the Queen. Almost simultaneously with the arrival of this dispatch in Dublin, came Donald Gorm himself from the Glynns, with the offer to put himself at the head of the Copeland Island Scots and march forthwith against the rebel Earl. He reminded Russell of the unbroken loyalty of his father, Angus, and of his agent, Randall McNess, ever since the granting to them of the Glynns by Perrot, and he finished up with an undertaking that, if he were given a free hand, he would bring Tyrone to his knees within three months. Russell replied that he himself would gladly avail himself of Donald's offer, but that his instructions from England were directly to the contrary. He wrote, however, once more to Cecil, reporting the incident, and reiterating his conviction that the use of the Scots was the one and only way to bring the rebellion to a speedy termination.

Not to be outdone by the Antrim Scots, Shane McBrian and Neil McHugh, Phelim Bacagh's two grandsons, also made their appearance in Dublin in the same week, each offering to serve Her Majesty against Tyrone with all his energy and forces, provided he might be assured of the lands of the other. Neither of these offers, however, was accepted, the policy of the Queen at the moment being to save her pocket by patching up as dignified a peace as circumstances would permit of. Tyrone was, as usual, making violent protestations of loyalty, backed up by sycophantic offers of absolute submission; and Elizabeth, who had already experienced four years of a most expensive and profitless war, with nothing resulting but a ceaseless drain on her exchequer, felt like giving up the struggle, and wrote to that effect to Russell.

Elizabeth at the time was not well, and the workings of her mind stand out perfectly clearly throughout the correspondence between her and Russell. She thoroughly realized at last

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 182-26-1.

that her English army in Ireland was not trying,* and that, till she could find a man strong enough to stamp out the multitude of abuses that had crept in, her only chance of subjugating Tyrone lay in the co-operation of the Scots. This last she grudgingly admitted; but the expedient was still bitterly distasteful to her, not only because it was an admission of failure and as such humiliating to the last degree, but because her old standing prejudices against the Scots had become ingrained as a part of her nature, and at her time of life were ineradicable.

So, as the lesser evil of the two, Norris received orders to open peace negotiations with Tyrone, and the Scots went back whence they had come. It is only fair to Norris, in view of the serious allegations made against him subsequently, to say that he himself at this period was opposed to a peace, which, as he pointed out, and as everybody in Ulster knew perfectly well, was only desired by Tyrone so that he might gain time. Norris, however, while placarding facts which were already public property, omitted to add that the Queen's resolve was in the main born of his own unaccountable inertia. He had at his disposal that which few commanders in Ireland had ever been able to boast, viz., a well-equipped English army, and yet his troops had only twice taken the field since Russell had returned to Dublin at the end of July. On the first of these occasions Captain William Warren had—under very suspicious circumstances—led a party of forty-six horsemen straight into an ambush which Tyrone had laid, and as to which it was freely hinted that Warren himself had full information. All his men were killed, but he himself was captured and kept for several weeks at Castle Roe, nominally as Tyrone's prisoner, but in reality as his guest and confederate. In the end he was exchanged for two O'Neil prisoners from Newry.†

On the second occasion there was a skirmish just outside Armagh, in which Norris and his brother, Sir Henry, were both wounded. Sir Henry Duke tried to magnify this affair, which was fought in September, into a great battle, in which Tyrone's army was completely overthrown, but in reality it

* "And for the musters," she wrote to Russell on March 25th, 1596, "of which let Ralph Lane be sharply warned, either we have none, or such as we assure you it is ludicrous to the world to hear what an army we pay, and what an army we have."

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 183-80-1.

was a very trivial affair. Norris's force was attacked while passing through a defile. The vanguard and "battle" were allowed to pass unmolested, but the rearguard, with which was Norris and his brother, was assailed by wild volleys from a wood which abutted on the track. The Commander-in-Chief was probably the chief target aimed at, for his horse received no less than four bullet-wounds, and he himself two. Finding himself unable to move, Norris urged his brother, Sir Henry, to charge into the wood, which he did, completely routing the party concealed there, who did not await the attack. Tyrone was said to have lost some sixty men in the pursuit which followed, while Norris had nine killed and thirty-two wounded, among the latter being Sir Henry, who received a bullet-wound in the thigh while leading his charge.*

These two insignificant encounters represent the sum total of Norris's efforts against the rebels during the late summer of 1595. His inaction was enough to discourage a younger and more sanguine monarch than Elizabeth. The Government forces, which included a considerable proportion of Flanders veterans, now nominally numbered 6,300, and, in actual fact, probably approached half that figure. The weather and the season were in every way propitious for an active offensive, and yet week after week was allowed to elapse and nothing was done or even attempted. Norris pleaded, in excuse, his own two wounds, which refused to heal (in one of which gangrene eventually set in, which killed him), his faulty equipment and a defective commissariat, which reduced his men to a diet of bread and water. This last complaint was chiefly aimed at discrediting Russell, and throwing the onus of failure on his shoulders. Unfortunately, however, for its intended effect, it reached Headquarters only a few days after a jubilant letter from Bagenal, in which he announced the capture of 2,000 of Tyrone's cattle!

The Queen's resolve to treat for peace was no doubt equally welcome to the Earl and to Norris. On the strength of it, the two leaders met, and Norris, who was accompanied by Sir George Bouchier and Sir Geoffrey Fenton, showed some anxiety to discuss preliminary terms, but without making much headway. Tyrone, whose aim was invariably to procrastinate, pleaded his inability to act, or even to formally discuss final

* Trevelyan Papers.

terms, without first consulting Hugh Roe, who was at the time too busy land-grabbing in Connaught to attend the conference. In the end, a cessation of hostilities was agreed to for three months from October 1st, in order to give the three rebel Hughs time to properly schedule their grievances and to draw up their terms of submission. As pledges for his good conduct during the truce, Tyrone placed four of the O'Hagan children in Norris's keeping—a transaction which was afterwards very unfavourably commented upon by Norris's enemies, as the hostages given were proved to have no value whatever in the eyes of the depositors.*

During the three months' truce, the Government had many offers of service against the rebels from minor Ulster chiefs, among whom were Neil McArt, Tyrone's nephew, Hugh Roe's younger brother Rory, and Sir John O'Dogherty. Not only did these three offer personal service against their troublesome relative, but they also undertook to detach from his standard a considerable following, which there is little doubt that they were in a position to do. The offer was very wisely declined, as it was sufficiently obvious that the only motive behind it was a desire on the part of the friendly chiefs to step into their relatives' shoes, where they were likely to prove quite as mutinous and disorderly as those they had replaced.

Another simultaneous offer in rather a different category was that of James McSorley, who, the moment the truce between Norris and Tyrone was signed, presented himself at Carrickfergus, and in the presence of Captains Egerton, Merryman, Bethel and Moyle (the latter of Her Majesty's ship *Moon*, lying at this moment in Carrickfergus Bay), made his humble submission, and undertook that if his brother Randall were released from Dublin Castle he would serve Her Majesty with all the resources at his command. He added, in explanation, that, unless Randall were so released, it was out of his power to carry out his loyal intentions, as he had no children, kith or kin of any sort, except his brother, to manage his estate during his absence in the field†. It is not to be conceived that any member of his audience attached much value to this undertaking, for it was a matter of common knowledge that James was on the very closest terms of intimacy with Tyrone. Nevertheless, Randall McSorley was released—not in antici-

* Capt. Lee to Burleigh, Sept. 2nd, 1596. † Cal. State Papers, Vol. 182-78-2.

pation of his elder brother's good services, but in exchange for his illegitimate brother Loder (a mere boy), and in consideration of the sum of £200 paid to someone, presumably to Russell, though this is not definitely established.* From the circumstances surrounding this incident arises the first suggestion of the Deputy's fall from his initial honesty. The impeccable Norris expressed himself full of honest disgust at the transaction. "So," he wrote to Cecil, "is Her Majesty's service everywhere managed." Norris's scandalized denunciation of the act may be taken as *prima facie* evidence that Russell was the recipient of the bribe, or, at all events, that Norris thought he was, for there was no other man that the Commander-in-Chief would so gladly have seen recalled.

It was not long before Tyrone's real reasons for applying for a three months' truce were made very clear, for the Government succeeded in intercepting two letters dispatched jointly by him and Hugh Roe to Spain. The first was to the King of Spain, and ran as follows: "Our only hope of establishing the Catholic religion rests on your assistance. Now or never our Church must be succoured. By the timidity or negligence of the messengers our former letters have not reached you. We therefore again beseech you to send us 2,000 or 3,000 soldiers, with money and arms, before the Feast of St. Philip and St. James. With such aid we hope to restore the faith of the Church, and to secure you a kingdom."† The second letter was to Don Carlos, urging him to forward their cause with the King, and finishing up with the ominous prediction that, if the assistance asked for were given, "hereties shall fail in Ireland within a year as smoke in presence of the fire."‡

The chief value of these letters, at the time they were intercepted, lay in the startling revelation which they afforded of Tyrone's duplicity, and of his sinister designs against the Protestant population, *i.e.*, the English. Its chief interest, however, to-day lies in its remarkable exposure of the double dealings of the Government. It is hardly conceivable that, after receiving first-hand evidence from Tyrone's own pen that he was merely temporizing till aid from Spain should make him strong enough to throw off the mask, the Govern-

* Capt. Egerton to Burleigh, Oct. 1595.

† Cal. State Papers, Sept. 1595-167.

‡ Carew MSS., 1595-168. Cal. State Papers, Vol. 183-61.

ment should still continue parleying, negotiating and going through the worn-out farce of pretending to accept as genuine all his fulsome protestations of loyalty. And yet so it was. In case the letter itself might have left any doubt as to Tyrone's real designs, Art McBaron, the Earl's elder and illegitimate brother—at the moment a candidate for Government favour—wrote to the Privy Council warning them that his brother's only object was to gain time, and that any peace terms arranged would be disregarded the moment the Spaniards arrived.* None of these warnings appear to have influenced the Government in the slightest degree. The policy of the moment was to picture Tyrone as an erring penitent craving for readmission to the fold. He had so far committed no unpardonable crime, and, but for the irrefutable evidence of his double dealings, such a policy would have been justifiable enough. In face of the evidence it is not to be satisfactorily explained.

On November 22nd Tyrone wrote to the Deputy from Dungannon setting out the terms on which he and Hugh Roe were ready to submit. He agreed in the first place to pay a fine of 20,000 cattle, to be levied on the lands of all those who had rebelled, and, further, to accept sheriffs in all the Ulster counties, provided such sheriffs were honest men, "lest by their evil dealing we be driven to forget our loyalty in seeking the safety of our lives and goods, as heretofore we have been much abused by the over-greedy desire of lucre, and the ill-dealing of such as have borne office in Ulster."

These proposals were sent across to England, and within a month the Queen's acceptance came back, qualified by the stipulations that the 20,000 cattle were to be handed over within six months, and that Maguire and O'Rourke were to be excluded from the general pardon. These articles were personally carried to Tyrone at Dungannon on Christmas Eve by Captain Blount, who brought back word that both Tyrone and Hugh Roe, who was in Lifford at the time, would meet the Deputy in the Fews (Co. Armagh) on January 15th to discuss the amendments. As though to emphasize the farcical character of all these pretended negotiations, Monaghan was treacherously seized by Cormac McBaron and the O'Hagans on the very same day that Blount arrived at Dungannon. As a sacrifice to appease the wrath of the Queen

* John Morgan to Deputy, July, 1596.

at the loss of this important place, which was handed over to Cormac without a shot being fired, six English members of the garrison were made scapegoats and hanged. The real culprit, however, was Patrick McArt Moyle,* the sheriff and Constable of the town. This man had been in the English pay and English confidence ever since the rebellion broke out, and he was considered sufficiently trustworthy to occupy the position of Constable and sheriff of Monaghan during the cessation, when no hostilities were to be expected. Cessations and treaties, however, meant no more to Tyrone than a convenience to himself, and, a week before the treaty expired, he persuaded the treacherous McMahon to give the place into his hands. Six Englishmen, as has been said, were hanged, and Patrick McArt Moyle, fearing an extension of the expiatory sacrifice, took refuge in flight and joined the rebels.

The seizure of Monaghan during the treaty practically put a halter round the necks of the four unfortunate O'Hagan children, who were lying in Armagh as hostages; but the penalty was not exacted, possibly for the reason that neither Tyrone nor the parents of the children would have cared in the least if it had been. In fact it was freely alleged, in condemnation of Norris's acceptance of such children, that the parents of the pledges were among the most eager to break the treaty and get possession of Monaghan.

Encouraged by this first success, Tyrone next tried to get possession in the same manner of Dundrum and Strangford Castles. He offered Captain James Fitz-Garratt £100, and, in fact, anything else he might ask, if he would hand over to him these two places. His offers were preceded by very exact inquiries as to the capacity of Lough Strangford for sheltering a large fleet, so that it was at once apparent that his eagerness to get possession of the two Castles, which dominated the harbour, had at the back of it the vision of a Spanish fleet sailing in to his assistance. Fitz-Garratt loftily put aside the proffered bribe, and—after solemnly swearing secrecy to Tyrone—promptly reported the whole occurrence to the Privy Council.† Had there been a shred of honesty of purpose left in the Dublin executive, these two consecutive proofs of Tyrone's treacherous intentions could not have failed to have

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 186-26. Fenton to Burleigh, Dec. 24th, 1595.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 192-7-11.

broken off further negotiations; but, so far from this being the case, Gardiner and Wallop were sent up to continue the farce of treating with the Earl, as though he were the most honourable and chivalrous of men. On the occasion of this meeting Tyrone came accompanied by Hugh Roe, and they both came with such exceedingly bad consciences that they were afraid to come even within hailing distance of the Commissioners. Wallop and Gardiner soon grew tired of conducting an interview across a two-mile-wide valley, and in the end rode back to Dundalk, from whence they sent a messenger to the Ulster chiefs carrying a safe-conduct sealed and signed by both Commissioners. Reassured by the possession of this document, the two chiefs then fixed a fresh appointment for the 21st at Sir John Bellew's house, and thither the respective parties rode on the day named. With the two Commissioners went Sir Henry Duke (to act as interpreter in the case of Hugh Roe) and Captain Garrett Moore, as a public advertisement of the pro-Tysonian sympathies of the Deputation.

Tyrone and Hugh Roe arrived with 200 horsemen, which was quite contrary to agreement. Even with this formidable bodyguard they were still in a highly nervous condition and sat for a long while on the hill opposite, spying the country round, before they would come forward. "During our parley," Gardiner reported, "we found them as men exceeding fearful, continually gazing about them and less attentive unto our speeches than at the first."* The suggestion was at first made that the conference should take a divided form, Wallop interviewing Hugh Roe, while Gardiner talked to Tyrone; but Hugh Roe—who was as insolent throughout as Tyrone was sycophantic—absolutely refused to have anything to do with such an arrangement, or to allow Tyrone to speak a word out of his hearing, an objection which argued little trust between the two chiefs. So in the end the parley proceeded in the presence of all.

The Commissioners began by upbraiding Tyrone for his breach of faith in having seized Monaghan during the cessation. Tyrone, of course, denied all complicity in the transaction, which he assured them was undertaken without his knowledge or consent. He pleaded impotence of control over his illegiti-

* Commissioners to Deputy, Carew MSS., Jan. 23rd, 1596.

mate son Con and his brother Cormac, and he assured the Commissioners that, if he were to attempt to suppress such acts of violence, the O'Hagans and O'Quins would at once depose him and nominate Cormac in his place. This was possibly true, and, in fact, is in accordance with the general evidence. Tyrone, beyond doubt, had no restrictive power over his followers. A year after the Dundalk parley, Captain Lee went on a friendly visit to Tyrone at Dungannon, and came back strongly impressed (as most people were after private interviews with the Earl) with the loyalty of Tyrone's own intentions, but admitting that he "was directed whether he will or not by that damnable crew who now direct him." Cormac he described as a man "only fit for the gallows."

As a set-off against the treacherous seizure of Monaghan, Hugh Roe referred to his own abduction and imprisonment by Perrot while yet an unoffending boy, to which Gardiner replied that it was lawful for the Queen so to hold her subjects as pledges, and that the same course had always been adopted by the native chiefs themselves. "Why, then," inquired the Earl, "do you take great sums of money for their deliverance, as you have done of the O'Reillys?"* "The Queen," Gardiner replied, "set him freely at liberty." "Yes," said the Earl, "but others had the money." "Alas," replied the virtuous Commissioner, "the Queen's officers are sometimes corrupt, as are also yours."

The next day the conference was continued, but nothing further was settled beyond a concession to Tyrone of the indefinite prolongation of the cessation, which was, of course, all that he cared about. Hugh Roe, throughout the parley, was far more defiant than the Earl, and told the Commissioners plainly that he would endorse no terms which included the restoration of Inishowen to O'Dogherty. O'Dogherty himself, who was present during the parley (as a prisoner), wisely held his tongue, but no doubt had his own thoughts on the subject. The conference ended with the formal handing in to the Commissioners of the written grievances of all the chiefs who had rebelled. These grievances were remarkable to this extent, that they, one and all, with the exception of Shane McBrian's, traced the cause of the general disaffection

* Fitzwilliam and Maplesdon, the Governor of Dublin Castle, were reported to have divided £1,000 over the escape of O'Reilly after Segar had been deposed for refusing the bribe.

back to some unconstitutional act on the part of Fitzwilliam. Hugh Roe complained of the late Deputy's perfidy in imprisoning his mother's chief counsellor, Sir Owen O'Toole, after he had, through Bermingham, promised that he would not take him outside the limits of Donegal.*

Hugh Maguire's complaint was directed equally against Bingham and Fitzwilliam. Bingham, he said, had raided his country while he was a peaceable subject, and committed many devastations. Fitzwilliam he accused of having accepted a bribe of 300 beeves, which Maguire had paid him in order to secure exemption for one year from a sheriff in Fermanagh, notwithstanding which Captain Willis, with 100 men, was sent as sheriff.†

Brian McHugh Oge McMahon complained that Hugh Roe McMahon had paid 650 beeves to the Fitzwilliam's family according to arrangement, and that, in spite of this, he had been hanged and his lands divided up among a number of Englishmen. Shane McBrian's grievance was that Essex had taken Magee Island from his father, and that Bagenal had kept him in prison till he had agreed to make over to him the Barony of Magheramourne.

Tyrone himself was not equal to the task of manufacturing a grievance, which is hardly surprising, in view of the fact that he had now, for over thirty years, been the spoilt child of the Queen and English Government, to whom he owed everything. His attitude was rather one of righteous indignation at the grievances of the others—grievances which, as the chief man in Ulster, it was his duty to see righted, or, at any rate, neutralized by some means.

The examination of the grievances, and their transmission from Ireland to England and back again, occupied the whole of February and March, and early in April the Queen's final instructions reached the Lord Deputy.‡ A general pardon, those instructions laid down, was to be extended to everyone who had offended, beginning with the minor rebels, and afterwards to include Tyrone and Hugh Roe, if these would agree to certain terms which would be discussed with them by

* Carew MSS, Jan 27th, 1596. † *Ibid.*

‡ Although the Queen acquiesced in the terms proposed she was so indignant with the manner in which the Commissioners had conducted the affair that when Gardiner visited London shortly afterwards she refused him her presence (Cecil to Deputy, March 9th, 1596).

officially-appointed delegates. Accordingly, in the early days of April, Sir John Norris and Sir Geoffrey Fenton, who had been nominated for the undertaking, rode to Dundalk, carrying the Queen's pardon for all the lesser chiefs concerned in the rebellion, *i.e.*, Hugh Maguire, Brian McHugh Oge McMahon, Sir John O'Reilly, Philip O'Reilly and Shane McBrian. These notables collected in the market-place at Dundalk, and there humbly received the envoys on their knees,* after which they were given absolution, a complete whitewash for all their past misdeeds, and suitable exhortations to behave as dutiful subjects in the future.

Tyrone himself was in the neighbourhood, but neither he nor Hugh Roe put in an appearance during the first few days of the conference, as each was, at the moment, very unwilling to meet the other. The fact was that Hugh Roe had recently turned out of his house Tyrone's daughter, with whom he had been living for six years, but whom—in hopes of getting the Earl of Clanricarde's daughter—he had never married. Tyrone, not unnaturally, resented this affront to his blood, and a very serious coolness sprang up in consequence between the two chiefs.† Tyrone's daughter (who was illegitimate) went back to her father, who—having no use for her—did his very best to get the Earl of Argyle to marry her, but, as may be supposed, without success. Exasperated by this disappointment, Tyrone now made such very plain representations on the subject to Hugh Roe that the latter finally agreed to take back the lady and to go through the marriage ceremony with her, and in this way harmony was once more restored.‡ This was all subsequent to the conference, at the time of which the relations between the two chiefs were, as has been said, exceedingly strained. As soon, however, as Tyrone learned that his pseudo-son-in-law was not in Dundalk, he rode into the outskirts of the town, and there presented himself to the Commissioners. His attitude on this occasion was not as contrite as might have been desired. He resolutely refused to give up Shane's sons, which was one of the Queen's special stipulations, and, on the other hand, he insisted on the withdrawal of the Government garrison from Armagh. Both points were weakly conceded by the Commissioners, who,

* Norris and Fenton to Privy Council, April 22nd, 1596.

† Russell to Burleigh, April 2nd, 1596. ‡ Bagenal to Deputy, April 6th, 1597.

at the end of three weeks of burlesque negotiations, on April 24th signed an agreement every point of which was in favour of the rebels. The points which the Commissioners claimed that they had gained were two in number. The first was an undertaking which Tyrone gave that he would pay a substantial fine in consideration of the Government evacuation of Armagh, a fine which both parties, of course, knew would never be paid; and the second was an undertaking for the delivery of Cormac McBaron's son and of Tirlough McHenry's son as pledges in lieu of the four O'Hagan children. This last was no less of a farce than the other, for it was well known that the pledges deposited by the Earl were never hanged, no matter how deeply he might offend; witness the survival of the four O'Hagans.

Russell was coldly sarcastic over the achievements of the Commissioners, and wrote his mind very freely to Norris. "Nine months spent in cessations and treaties," was his scornful comment, "out of which have grown our greatest loss."* On the other hand, Tyrone was now in the very best of spirits, as he had every right to be. The moment the articles were signed he took himself off to Castle Roe with Magennis's daughter, and there the happy couple amused themselves for ten days spearing and netting salmon on the Bann.† This charming idyll was interrupted by the arrival in Donegal of no less a personage than Don Alonzo de Cobos, a Spanish grandee, who landed with a considerable retinue at Killibegs on the 1st May, and was thence escorted with suitable parade to Lifford. News was sent to the Earl at Castle Roe of the important arrival, and he and Henry Hoveden at once got to horse and rode across the forty miles to Lifford, arriving there almost at the same time as the Spanish delegate.‡ There was a great gathering to welcome the guests, among those present being Hugh Roe, Cormac McBaron, O'Cahan, Art O'Hagan, Saloman Farenan, O'Gallagher Bishop of Derry, and Tyrone's mother, who was now the widow of Sir Owen O'Toole. This distinguished party entertained Don Alonzo to a dinner, at which there was much joyous carousing, and much promise of great times to come in the near future for the Catholic Church and for its principal Ulster supporters.

* Russell to Norris, June 30th, 1596. † Cal. State Papers, Vol. 189-27.

‡ Rice-ap-Hugh to Deputy, May 18th, 1596.

CHAPTER XXI

Tyrone's pan-Irish Army—Death of Sir John O'Reilly—Philip O'Reilly usurps the succession—Tyrone's son Con protests—Death of Philip O'Reilly—James McSorley seizes the Glynnns—Angus Oge's threat—James McSorley submits to Tyrone—He marries Tyrone's daughter.

IT had been from no mere sentiment of courtesy to a stranger that Tyrone had been induced to undertake a forty-mile ride across Coleraine, and to leave Magennis's daughter languishing at Castle Roe. It was rumoured (and as it turned out correctly) that the envoy had brought with him much treasure, and Tyrone knew enough of his confederates to make him anxious to get this treasure under lock and key without a moment's unnecessary delay. Consignments of Spanish doubloons had now, for some time past, been arriving at intervals at Killibegs, Lough Foyle, or Lough Swilly. For purposes of promoting the rebellion, money was little less effective than men, for it put Tyrone in a position not only to bribe Government officials to shut their eyes to that which was going on, but also to arm, drill and equip the male adult population of Ulster.

The organization of a pan-Irish army was at the present moment the Earl's main anxiety, for, as already explained, the Scots had by this time almost entirely deserted the rebel combination in the north.* Such being the circumstances, Tyrone had realized for some time past that, in the future, he would have to rely for his fighting forces mainly on the native element, and this native element was now being regularly drilled by imported Spanish instructors. Of these foreign drill-sergeants a considerable consignment had come with Don Alonzo, and subsequently remained in the country for the use and instruction of the Irish army. We are told that this army now numbered 3,500 well-drilled and equipped men, of whom 1,000 were provided by County Tyrone, 1,000 by Done-

* Russell to Burleigh, Sept. 8th, 1595.

gal, 500 by Clandeboye, and 1,000 by the three southern counties of Ulster and the three northern counties of Connaught.* Tyrone aimed at doubling these numbers, and in point of fact, when the climax was reached at the Battle of Kinsale, he had as many as 6,500 Irish troops under his command.

Recognizing the urgent need for an efficient army, the Earl, we are told, "infinitely belaboured his men with training"† to the intense disgust of the Irish kerne, who, under the pressure of an unaccustomed discipline, declared that they hated the best Spaniard far more than they did the worst Englishman.‡

Tyrone's military preparations were not allowed to interfere with his civil administration of the province, of which he still considered himself the absolute autocrat. Any show of independence on the part of his urraghs or vassals was speedily visited by the summary punishment which had always been associated with the rule of the O'Neils. A case arose in Cavan which gave him an opportunity of showing that—though in rebellion against the Government—he had still time to deal with his home affairs. Sir John O'Reilly had died in Cavan in the late summer of 1595, and his death had at once given rise to the familiar dissensions so invariably associated with the tanistry system. Sir John's brother Philip made the first move by seizing the Brenny and having himself there proclaimed the O'Reilly, but he made the fatal mistake of doing so without first receiving the blessing of the great O'Neil. Such an act of presumption was not to be lightly overlooked, and in October Tyrone sent his illegitimate son Con into Cavan with a force which was sufficiently strong to establish the principle that he and he alone was to nominate any new chief in Ulster. Con, who was nothing if not thorough, carried out his mission with considerable zeal, killed Philip O'Reilly§ and, in the name of Tyrone, established Sir John's elder son Edmund in his place. This was in itself quite sufficient to make the Government hotly espouse the cause of the second son Mulmore, who, in the natural furtherance of his own aims, became from that time on an active ally of the Government, and was eventually killed fighting against Tyrone at the Battle of Yellowford.

* Rice-ap-Hugh to Deputy, Nov. 1596.

† Sir Ralph Lane to Essex, Oct. 23rd, 1596.

‡ Cal. State Papers, April, 1597. § Cal. State Papers, Vol. 194-21-3.

While matters were thus shaping in Cavan, James McSorley in the north had been giving signs of growing territorial ambition, and of various other undesirable peculiarities. He had already turned McQuillin out of the Route, and he now followed this up by seizing the Glynnys, where Randall McNess's retainers were numerically too weak to make any practical protest. Donald Gorm was in Scotland at the time, and the only representative of the family in Ireland was Angus Oge, *i.e.*, Angus Junior. He fortunately managed to elude capture by the invaders, and set sail for Scotland in a small galley, with a parting promise that he would come back from Cantyre with such a force as would make short work of all the sons of Sorley Boy.* These, however, were finally brought to their senses by other and quicker means. Tyrone cared nothing for Angus, but he had no intention of seeing a man like James McSorley—whose services could always be bought by the Government at a price—grow too strong. He accordingly laid himself out to champion the hitherto neglected cause of McQuillin with an entirely new zeal. McSorley was peremptorily ordered to contract his borders to their old limits, or to feel the weight of the Earl's displeasure. This latter he was by no means anxious for, and, in face of a danger which he knew to be very real, and the reality of which had only recently been impressed upon him by the fate of Philip O'Reilly, he sought an alliance with the English, promising to assist the Government with all his forces if they would support him in his recent acquisitions and protect him against Tyrone. The Government made no immediate reply, and in the meanwhile Monaghan had—as already described—fallen into Tyrone's hands. This latter event had an immediate effect on the situation in Antrim, for McSorley—seeing that the affront was swallowed without even an attempt at retaliation on the part of the Government, and observing that the perennial negotiations with the Earl went on as though nothing out of the ordinary had happened—concluded that Tyrone's party was the stronger of the two, and promptly tendered his submission to the Earl. Tyrone was highly delighted at this development, for the sons of Sorley Boy were now the only channel through which he could hope to draw any assistance from Scotland, and, in order to cement the alliance, he produced a daughter—though a very young one—as

* Russell to Privy Council, Aug. 13th, 1596. Cal. State Papers, Vol. 192-7-3.

a wife for James. "The Earl," Richard Weston, his accountant, wrote, "hath lately married his daughter of nine years of age to James McSorley."* This signal mark of favour was highly appreciated by James and his brothers, and, with a view to celebrating the change in the family fortunes, they made a spirited raid on Carrickfergus, and carried off several droves of the townsmen's cattle.

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 201-67-2 and Vol. 201-70.

CHAPTER XXII

Maurice Kyffin appointed auditor of the army accounts—Astounding revelations—Frauds practised by the Master of Musters and the Captains—Misery of the common soldiers—Russell's uneasiness—He issues new and stringent regulations—Indignation of the Queen at the abuses disclosed—Her scathing letter to the Privy Council—Russell recalled—Appointment of Lord Burgh.

AT the close of the year 1596 the Queen's interest and attention was diverted from the sporadic splutterings of Tyrone's rebellion to the astounding revelations which followed on the appointment of one Maurice Kyffin as auditor of the army accounts. The substance of Kyffin's startling report, issued after several months devoted to investigation, was that the returns of the Captains of Musters were systematically falsified, and that the English army in effect only existed on paper. Sir Conyers Clifford, *e.g.*, regularly drew pay for 2,000 men, but he had never mustered more than 1,200, and of these the majority were Irish. If the 1,200 men had been paid, the fraud would have been a little less scandalous, but it was now made abundantly clear that the common practice with all the Captains in Ireland was to draw for a purely fictitious muster, and then not even to pay the few that did answer the roll. Sir Ralph Lane, the Master-General of the Musters, was pointed to as the central figure round which the entire conspiracy revolved, his practice being to pass on to the Captains only a portion of the money sent over from England for the payment of their Companies, the balance remaining in his own hands. In some cases he passed on none. Captain Egerton complained that neither he nor any of the Carrickfergus garrison had drawn pay for five years. All his private substance, he pleaded, had been expended in Her Majesty's service. Egerton's was by no means an isolated case; it was indeed typical rather than exceptional, and Burleigh, on receiving the report, ceased to wonder that men placed in such a position should be tempted to treat with Tyrone for the betrayal

of posts which offered neither honour nor profit, and the maintenance of which for the Queen devoured their private means.

The Captains—being themselves ill-used and defrauded—in their turn defrauded the men. Such attenuated money-bags as did from time to time get as far as the Captains, got no farther. The men got nothing—nothing, that is, from the State. For their pay and their subsistence they had to depend precariously on what they could rob the country people of. This was, in fact, an adaptation of the native custom of *coyne*, livery and bonaght so rigidly banned by the English Government as being the primary cause of all the internal disorders in Ireland, and yet secretly practised by every Captain in the Queen's pay. The English soldiers, however, proved far less apt at the game of spoliation than the Irish, from which circumstance arose a practice, which gradually became general, of replacing such English as died or deserted by Irish, who were used to the bonaght system, and who thrived on it where the English starved.

There is no direct evidence to prove that it was at Russell's instigation that Kyffin was appointed, but it is abundantly clear that the former was considerably scandalized by disclosures which might easily be interpreted in England as a reflection on his own rule. In a desperate attempt to make amends for malpractices in the past which he foresaw might easily be attributed to him, he now—at the eleventh hour—issued orders, of an all-but Cromwellian severity, against the robbery or abuse of the natives by the soldiers.* By the curious irony of fortune, however, the very stringency of these regulations became an additional source of evil, for they gave the Captains such power of life and death over their men, that these were afraid to clamour too loud for their rights, lest they should be hanged for the looting which alone saved them from starvation.

The case of the common soldiers was indeed desperate. Even Wallop, who was himself no paragon of virtue, and whose accounts after his death were found to be in a sadly irregular state, was moved to draw Burleigh's attention to the extreme misery of the troops who were expected by those in England to march on from victory to victory. He reported them to be "destitute of brogues, shirts, mantles, or anything to protect

* Carew MSS., Sept. 18th, 1596.

them from the weather." Their feet, we are told, literally rotted off them from neglect. They died like flies of every conceivable disease which springs from improper feeding, clothing and housing. Many deserted and many were hanged for a mutiny for which every possible provocation was given. The gaps were filled up with Irish, who were ordered to adopt English names in order to back the deception. But let us hear Kyffin himself, in his own curious polysyllabic language. "The shameful corruption in the Officers of Musters, so long continued, together with the infinite and inveterate art of falsehood here practised (and as it were authorized by general custom), have irrecoverably damnified this State. It is lamentable to consider whether the outcry of the soldiers everywhere for want of pay, or of the country people, extremely robbed and pillaged by the soldiers, be the more grievous. The whole country, even within the English Pale, be left waste without habitation or tillage; and now, as the inhabitants of the land go generally a-begging with their wives and children, so the soldiers, having left neither for others nor yet for themselves any further means of relief, do by the just judgment of God most miserably starve and famish. Between the rebels on the one hand and our own soldiers (being for the most part Irish and living altogether on the spoil) all is devoured and destroyed. Though the expense of Her Majesty's treasure sent over here be exceeding great, yet is there here no manner of appearance thereof. The Captains for their part exclaim, our soldiers die wretchedly in the open streets and highways, the native subject spoiled and brought to extreme beggary, no service in war performed, no military discipline or civil justice exercised; briefly the whole kingdom ruined and foraged." In a later report (March, 1597), he alludes to frauds even more deep-seated than he had at first suspected. "I am," he reports, "somewhat entered into discovery of one of the most foul and shameful abuses that ever was heard of in any State, viz., the sale and purloining of the soldiers' victual by the clerks and inferior officers of bands, whereby the poor soldiers are most lamentably hunger-starved. It is not creditable what misery and extremity they are put to. They die wretchedly and woefully in the streets and highways, far less regarded than any beasts. Nothing is more needed than for good authority to be conferred on a faithful man who would

surely look into these enormities." The last observation was probably intended less as a reflection on Russell than as a direct hit at Lane, for it was clearly not as Deputy that the faithful man was to come, but as Master of Musters. To the Queen, however, it appeared all-important that the man at the head of the State should himself be clear of all reproach. She was sufficient acute to know that neither Russell, nor, in fact, any of his predecessors, had any opportunity of participating in the profits derived from the army frauds; but she also knew that a Deputy, who was himself corrupt in other departments of the administration, was tied hand and foot when it came to the censure and punishment of fraud in others. As far as the Queen's pocket was concerned, it made little difference whether Russell was a participator in, or merely a condoner of, the frauds. It was sufficiently clear that only a rigidly honest man could even attempt to put an end to abuses that had taken such deep root. From the moment that Kyffin's report was received, Elizabeth began to cast about for such a man among her subjects, and such a man she ultimately found in Lord Burgh, K.G., Governor of Brill in Holland. Burgh was a great and a good man, but neither he, nor Burleigh, nor the Queen, had any illusions as to the extreme filth of the Augean stable that he was called upon to clear out, nor as to the perils that surrounded such an undertaking. "In Ireland," Maurice Kyffin had written, "there is nothing more dangerous and detestable than to be an honest man."* He himself, he reported, had been offered gold and horses from all quarters, if only he would suppress the truth, but he had resolutely pushed away all bribes, and as a consequence went about in daily fear of an assassination,† which, in the end, overtook him only too surely.

Burleigh was no less scandalized than the Queen at the state of affairs revealed by Kyffin, and he dispatched a memorandum to Ireland, giving the executive very clearly to understand that any Captain who withheld pay from his men was to be summarily executed. The Queen, at the same time, recalled Russell in a scathing letter which was addressed not so much to him individually as to the entire Privy Council. "We mind not by this our letter," she wrote, "to express our opinion

* Kyffin to Burleigh, April 17th, 1597.

† Kyffin to Burleigh, Dec. 26th, 1596, and Feb. 13th, 1597.

in whose default among you of our Council the same [abuses] happen, being so notorious that it is apparent to the whole world that never any realm was worse governed by all our ministers, from the highest to the lowest."* Her letter concluded with an injunction to all concerned to put a prompt end to the prevalent rascality, which, if continued, she threatened, will be "to your uttermost perils"—words of very ominous import under the reign of Good Queen Bess.

Following on the top of this letter came an order in December, 1596, for Gardiner (who was reputed the most honest of the Irish officials) to attend the Queen in England. What passed between the two is not known, but it is quite certain that Gardiner's report did not tend to raise Russell in the Queen's favour. "Sir William Russell has been debarred the Queen's presence,"† Cecil wrote to Lord Burgh as late as the end of June, 1597; so that it is clear that the Queen's displeasure reflected no mere ephemeral mood.

Russell's recall, and the disgrace attached to it, left the Dublin Privy Council unmoved. They were used to the sudden fall in favour of Deputies, and were rather interested than otherwise by the prospect of a change. Their chief concern appears to have been over the character of the new-comer, and as to the chances of his easy conformity with accepted practices. As to this point they were not kept long in doubt.

* Cal. State Papers, Dec. 1596.

† Cecil to Deputy, June 22nd, 1597.

CHAPTER XXIII

Lord Burgh lands at Bray—His agreement with Kyffin—His determination to suppress corruption—Death of Norris—Burgh's war preparations—Suspicious conduct of Warren, Barrett Moore and St. Leger—Burgh starts for the north—General consternation at the vigour of his preparations—Submission of Tirlough McHenry and Con O'Neil—Burgh crosses the Blackwater—He repairs the Fort and burns Dungannon—Forced to withdraw from lack of provisions—He advances once more in October—Burgh is taken ill at Newry—His death—Suspicion of poison—William Paule's accusation of Barrett Moore—Post-mortem in Dublin—Suspicious conduct of Warren—General relief in Ireland at Burgh's death—Tyrone's special reasons for relief—Burgh's contract with the Scots—Incenduv's attempts to cancel—Firm attitude of Angus—Death of Maurice Kyffin—Death of Henry Tudor—Suspicion of foul play—Sir Ralph Lane suspected—Sir Thomas Norris appointed Lord Justice—His dissatisfaction—Joint appointment of Loftus and Gardiner—Ormonde appointed Lieut.—General of the Army—Rebellion of Shane McBrian and Neil McHugh—Capture of Belfast and Edenduffearrick—Their recapture by Sir John Chichester—Sorley Boy's sons overrun the Glynns—They burn Glenarm and Red Bay—They raid Magee Island—Battle of Altfracken—Defeat and death of Chichester—Death of Capt. Merriman.

LORD BURGH landed at Bray on Whit-Sunday, 1597, and was immediately pursued by a letter of final instructions from the Queen. Elizabeth knew that her choice of a Deputy was a good one, but she had no intention that he should be allowed to slip down to the level of his predecessors merely for want of proper royal admonition. Burgh, to do him justice and to his own undoing, was a thoroughly honest man, and was equally determined with the Queen that the prevailing corruption should be stamped out, and that serious warfare should henceforth take the place of the *opera-bouffe* performances of the past five years. In a letter to Burleigh, written a fortnight after his arrival, he gave it as his opinion—no doubt as the result of a careful examination of facts—that Maurice Kyffin was “a proper and diligent man,” and concluded with the hope that “some redress would be found for the frauds practised upon Her Majesty.” In view of the subsequent development of events, this letter has more than a passing interest, for it furnishes unmistakable evidence that Burgh and Kyffin

were already in close agreement as to the procedure to be adopted in the matter of the army frauds. In fact we have this in so many words from Kyffin himself. "When I saw this shameful abuse," he wrote to Burleigh, "I set down certain notes in writing how to reform the same, the execution whereof the late Lord Deputy said he would command publicly. But his Lordship died before he had redressed any of these enormities. The eternal God, by the means of your Lordship, grant some amendment in time."* The amendment, however, when it did come, was not destined to be seen by poor Kyffin, for, within nine weeks of the date of his letter, he too had gone the same way as Lord Burgh, to be followed very shortly afterwards by his equally honest successor, Henry Tudor. It was not without good grounds that he had written that "in Ireland there is nothing more dangerous and detestable than to be an honest man."

The Deputy was the first victim, for he was incomparably the most dangerous of the three. In fact, without his strong co-operation, the other two were powerless to do more than expose and protest. Burgh's intentions in the matter were public property, for he blurted them out with more honesty than prudence. "This State," he wrote to Burleigh from the Blackwater, "is infested with more hidden corruption in every condition of man than ever any was ;"† and his further intentions in the matter he makes quite clear in a letter to Cecil written from the same camp. "I will be as good a physician against their diseases as I can. I came a stranger to them, and I could not imagine so bad and false a people. I now know them, and God, I doubt not, will deliver me from the burden of this business with profit to my blissful Queen."‡ His concluding hopes were not destined to be realized. God may have proposed such a consummation, but man disposed otherwise.

Burgh had come over with absolute power, military as well as civil, and his first act was to depose Sir John Norris, and send him back to his Presidency of Munster, where he died two months later at Mallow, in the house of his brother Thomas. In justice to his memory, it is only fair to say that his failure

* Kyffin to Burleigh, Oct. 27th, 1597.

† Burgh to Burleigh, Sept. 10th, 1597.

‡ Burgh to Cecil, Aug. 3rd, 1597.

to accomplish anything against Tyrone may, in some part, have been due to ill-health. He was ill when he first landed at Waterford, and, owing to his bad state of health, the two wounds he received in County Armagh—slight though they were in themselves—had not properly healed. He died of gangrene.

Having got the army under his hand, Burgh next wrote to Tyrone giving him one month in which to say his prayers. The Earl, in an attempt to punctuate his contempt for this ultimatum, made two successive raids upon Newry and Carrickfergus, but—being repulsed in each case*—missed his effect. Burgh retaliated with a long letter of reproof written in fine biblical language, and—having eased his mind by the dispatch of this document—turned all his energies to the more persuasive argument of armed activity.

The vigour of this determined Deputy's preparations alarmed the members of the Dublin Privy Council little less than it alarmed Tyrone himself, and they did their very utmost to dissuade him from the northern enterprise,† as to the serious character of which there was no longer any room for doubt; but all their endeavours crumbled away before the dogged determination of the Deputy. It is fairly evident from Burgh's letters home that—even though at first innocent—he very soon became alive to the motives behind the objections of his Privy Council. The disclosure of these motives disgusted though it did not disturb him. Confident in his own integrity of purpose, he had little fear that departmental villainy could, at the worst, do more than hamper for a time the rapidity of his reforms. Besides, it was not unreasonable to look forward, during his operations in the field, to relief from the intrigues of the Dublin Privy Council, which was technically a stationary body. In this expectation Burgh was justified, but he made a grievous mistake if he had reckoned that, because the Privy Council was left behind, all treachery and intrigue would be left behind with it. It was with him at every step of his journey to the north, frustrating his schemes, warning the rebels of his every intention and deliberately misinterpreting his orders. These hostile acts were chiefly associated at the time with the names of three of Burgh's Captains, Sir Warham St. Leger, Garrett

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 199-66.

† Capt. Philip Williams to Cecil, Oct. 20th, 1597;

Moore and William Warren. Of these three, Moore and Warren—who were half-brothers*—were the subject of some very startling accusations, their first and foremost accuser being one William Paule, an army contractor, who accompanied the army as a fighting volunteer. According to Paule, Garrett Moore and William Warren were, throughout Burgh's march to the north, in ceaseless communication with Tyrone, warning him beforehand of all intended moves.† These accusations of Paule's were afterwards corroborated from an entirely different and independent source, as follows: Owen McHugh O'Neil had been in command of one of Tyrone's companies during the whole of Lord Burgh's Ulster operations, but he afterwards came over to the Government side, and on July 17th, 1600, he made a long written deposition, in the course of which he stated that: "The said Garrett Moore and William Warren did continually send men unto Tyrone to give him warning when any service was intended against him."‡

It is hardly conceivable that Burgh had actual proof of these underhand practices, for in that case his course of action would have been quite clear; but he unquestionably had strong suspicions, for we have it from yet another source that during the march the Deputy on one occasion struck Warren and told him that he might have to answer to charges which would cost him his head.§ It is by no means improbable that this speech may have precipitated Burgh's own end, for he survived it but a short time.

We may now, however, deal with the actual facts of Burgh's march to the north in chronological order. He set out from Dublin at the beginning of July, leaving Loftus and Wallop to carry on the Metropolitan Government, and marched to Dundalk with all available forces, which amounted to a motley gathering of 3,000 very mixed troops. However, it was the determination of the Deputy rather than the quality of his troops which was responsible for the universal dismay with which his energetic action was viewed. Dublin officials, English captains and Irish rebels were all alike infected with the general alarm. We know this from a letter which one of the evil-

* Their mother had been a Brabazon.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 202, Part I.-17, and Vol. 207, Part V.-93.

‡ Cal. State Papers, July 17th, 1600, and Vol. 207, Part IV.-21.

§ Cal. State Papers, Vol. 203-58.

doers (Warren) wrote to Norris on March 15th, *i.e.*, before the new Deputy had even landed. "The coming of the Lord Burgh," he admitted, "had put them all in great fear,"* a remark which seems equally to incriminate Norris, to whom it was addressed, and the late Deputy, whose supersedure caused such consternation. The minor chiefs were no less disturbed than were the politicians and army captains by the reputation which preceded the new Deputy, and, in their case, the effect was magical. Before the new Deputy had so much as drawn his sword, or struck a blow, Tyrone's half-brother Tirlough McHenry of the Fewes, and his illegitimate son Con, had tendered their submissions, these being the two chiefs whose lands would in the ordinary course have been the first to be reached by the advancing army. Both these sudden converts to loyalty had been consistent rebels throughout the Russell-Norris régime, and their submission to the mere forecast of straightforward dealing is a remarkable tribute to the efficacy of that quality in Ireland. Nor was it a case of a half-hearted conversion. The reputation which had preceded Burgh commanded admiration and respect no less than it commanded fear. The half-brother and the son of the Earl volunteered to assist the Deputy against their troublesome relative with all the forces at their command, the only stipulation in the case of the former being that his son, who was still a pledge in Dublin Castle for the good conduct of the Earl, should be released. Burgh unhesitatingly accepted a condition which was obviously inseparable from the arrangement, and, acting on the advice of his new Irish allies, he pushed on from Dundalk with all possible speed, arriving at the Blackwater on the 14th. If Tyrone had been any general, or if he had been gifted with even a fair share of military valour, it was here that he would have made his great effort. He had enjoyed many months of peace and leisure wherein to perfect his defences, and of these months he had taken full advantage. His artificial obstacles and defences were, we are told, a marvel of elaboration,† and had Tyrone, with his whole army, faced the Deputy from the left bank of the river, it is hardly conceivable that the passage could have been forced. Instead of this, he left forty men of inferior rank to guard the ford, while he himself with his army,

* Warren to Norris, March 15th, 1597.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 200-29.

and all his chief leaders, remained behind at a safe distance at Dungannon. It is to be assumed that Tyrone reckoned that forty men would be sufficient to check Burgh's progress long enough to enable him to make his dispositions further north; and, indeed, Fenton himself admits that if the forty had shown any spirit, they could have held the army up for a week.* But they evidently had little relish for the task assigned them, and, leaving the elaborate defences to take care of themselves, they made for the woods behind, the moment the attack was sounded, an offence for which Tyrone, who was himself always the first to run away, afterwards hanged twenty of them.† Even with no opposition, the passage of the river was a trying and dangerous business, for, apart from the spikes with which it was plentifully sown, the water was very high for the time of year. Burgh himself was the first man into the water and the second man across, wading over with the water above his middle. His first business was very properly the reconstruction of the fort. This was, of necessity, a slow affair. During the completion of the work Burgh pitched his camp on the banks of the river, and from there made daily incursions into the precincts of Tyrone's country. On one of these occasions the Deputy's brother-in-law, Francis Vaughan, and Mr. Beresford rode too far afield, and were ambushed and killed. During another expedition of the same kind Captain Turner was killed and two of Burgh's nephews badly wounded. Burgh was very wrathful at these losses, and vented his spleen on Tyrone's methods of warfare, which he stigmatized as underhand and cowardly. "For as he is the dishonestest rebel of the world," he wrote in high disgust to Cecil, "so is he the most cowardly, never making good any fight, but bogring with his shot and flying from bush to bush."‡ Several times Burgh sent out a strong force, which paraded defiantly in the open in the hopes of tempting the Earl to battle, but with signal lack of success.

As soon as the repairs to the fort were finished, Burgh advanced his force as far as Dungannon, where he burned the town and all Tyrone's flour mills (the Castle itself had been burnt by Tyrone on the occasion of Norris's expedition), but still without seeing the enemy. This was as far north as he

* Fenton to Cecil, July 15th, 1597.

† William Soare to Sir Ralph Lane, July 16th, 1597.

‡ Burgh to Cecil, Aug. 3rd, 1597.

was destined to penetrate. Provisions began to run short, and by the first week in August it became evident that a temporary retirement to Newry was necessary if starvation were to be avoided. From the purely military point of view the withdrawal meant little, for, with the Blackwater Fort once more in Government hands, the Deputy held the key with which he could enter or leave Tyrone's territories at will. None knew this better than Tyrone himself, and none knew better than he that he was now face to face with the crisis of his career. In these circumstances, and influenced no doubt by his chronic unwillingness to face the ordeal by battle, the Earl, we are led to believe, had recourse to other methods. There is very little doubt that, with the connivance of his confederates in the Government army, he caused the Deputy to be poisoned. The Irish Annalists, indeed, do not disguise the fact, and refer to it with even a tinge of pride. "The Lord Deputy," the Four Masters record, "met his death prematurely by O'Neil." According to the tenets of the primitive law of retaliation, Tyrone would not have been going outside his rights in making away with the Deputy, for we know that Burgh himself had recently guaranteed one thousand pounds reward to an unnamed volunteer who had undertaken the assassination of the Earl. Burgh, to do him justice, shows symptoms of shame in the letter in which he discloses this fact to Elizabeth, but takes refuge—as the custom of the day was—behind the Almighty. Let us, however, follow the events in chronological order.

Lord Burgh returned to Dublin in September, and at the beginning of October advanced once more with his army to Newry, provided this time with all the requisites which his former experience had taught him the need of, but which the antagonism of his counsellors had kept back from him when he went north in July. The improvement in his present equipment left little doubt in the minds of any of the interested parties as to the certainty of his success, and he himself made no secret of his own confidence. However, shortly after leaving Newry, he was suddenly taken ill. In spite of the intense pain he was suffering, such was his devotion to the duty he had undertaken that he insisted upon being carried in a litter with the advancing army. He got as far as the Blackwater, but there his sufferings became too severe to be

borne, and he had to return to Newry, where this gallant and true man died on October 13th, after eleven days' illness.* "One of the noblest gents that ever I knew," says Wallop in a letter to Cecil, and there is nothing in the known facts to make us doubt the justice of the epitaph. The cause of death was officially returned as Irish ague, an obscure malady since fortunately extinct, but there is very little doubt that he was poisoned. The sequence of events, according to the testimony of William Paule, was as follows: On the completion of the first day's march after leaving Newry, Burgh, who was very hot and thirsty, made inquiries as to where he could get a drink. He was recommended to try Garrett Moore's tent, which appears to have been the only luxury of the sort with the army, Burgh himself being without anything of the kind. He did as advised, and Garrett Moore himself ministered to his wants.† He was immediately seized with internal cramp and great coldness, from which he was never afterwards free till the moment of his death. A post-mortem examination, which was made in Dublin by Dr. Cullen, revealed various symptoms strongly indicative of poison.‡ In view of the evidence furnished by the autopsy, and in view of the curious suddenness and peculiar circumstances surrounding the Deputy's death, an inquiry was instituted in England, to which both Garrett Moore's father, Sir Edward Moore, and William Warren were summoned. Nothing, however, was ever proved, and the affair must remain one of the unsolved mysteries of history. Attempts were made to discount the value of Paule's evidence by pointing out that, at the time he made his accusations, he himself was a prisoner in Dublin Castle on some charge connected with his office. Paule, however, we learn, was acquitted of the charges against him, and was reinstated in his office of Commissary of Ulster without any loss of honour,§ so that he may be safely accepted as a fairly responsible witness. So general, however, was the relief in Ireland at Burgh's disappearance from the scene, that the charges made against Moore and Warren met with but little sympathy, and were in the end allowed to drop. It is worthy of note, however,

* Loftus to Privy Council, Oct. 16th, 1597.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 202, Part I.-17.

‡ *Ibid.*

§ Cal. State Papers, Vol. 202, Part II.-26.

that Captain Thomas Williams—since Merriman's death the stoutest and truest of the English commanders in Ireland—persisted to the end in his conviction that Burgh had been poisoned.* The two Louth half-brothers were never definitely convicted of having had a hand in Lord Burgh's death, or even of the lesser crime of giving information to the enemy, but it is beyond all question that they were both on terms of the very closest intimacy and friendship with Tyrone; so much so, indeed, that the latter's young son Shane was fostered and brought up in the Moores' house at Mellifont. In spite, however, of this clear proof of intimacy, in spite of the knowledge that Garrett Moore had helped Hugh Roe to escape from Dublin Castle, in spite of Paule's accusations, in spite of the subsequent accusations of Captain Tyrrell and of Lord Howth, both of whom openly and publicly accused Garrett Moore of treason,† and in spite of Loftus the Chancellor's repeated declaration that Warren was a traitor to his Queen, neither the one nor the other was ever brought to justice, and to the end they both appear to have enjoyed the confidence of their Government associates in Ireland. At the date of Lord Howth's accusation against Garrett Moore in 1608, the latter was a member of the Privy Council, and Chichester, who was Deputy at the time, showed such evident reluctance to proceed to extremities against him that it can only be assumed that the two half-brothers had some special talisman that enabled them to tread in safety passages that would have brought others to the Tower or the block.

Paule's accusations against Moore and Warren did not stop short at the charge of poisoning. He affirmed that, after Burgh was taken ill, Garrett Moore sent word to Tyrone that the army was so disorganized that it was a favourable moment at which to attack it; and further that, by arrangement with the Earl, Garrett Moore himself led half the army into a pass where an ambush had been previously laid, upon seeing which the Deputy from his litter exclaimed: "Alas and woe is me, my gracious Queen, how is thy service betrayed on all hands in this country; this is Garrett Moore's and Warren's doing."‡ It is satisfactory to be able to record that, in spite of the collu-

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 202-17-2.

† Cal. State Papers, James, 1608-683. See also Cal. State Papers, Dec. 13th, 1608.

‡ Cal. State Papers, Vol. 202-17-2.

sion between the two leaders, the ambush in question failed, owing to the chronic timidity of Tyrone, who, in spite of his advantage of position, proved too irresolute to charge.

To what extent Tyrone and his accomplices among the English Captains benefited by Burgh's death, and how his straight dealing imperilled their secret gains, can best be described in the language of contemporary writers. First, as to Tyrone's more obvious interests. Here we can draw once more on the deposition of William Paule, at any rate a brave and true man, who was killed in action a year after making his statement. Paule insists strongly upon the point that Burgh's death was essential to the success of Tyrone's schemes for the following reasons : " First, the brave resolution of the Deputy, his audacity and forwardness in the execution of all manner of martial service against the traitor, and his rounder proceedings which threatened a short conclusion of the war, and consequently the ruin of all rebels, not to be prevented by temporizing sophistical dilatory circumvention or delays, nor otherwise possible to be avoided, but either by battle, which they will not abide, or else by violent means to be committed against the person of the Deputy."

In addition to the above motives, Tyrone had further reasons for getting rid of Burgh, of which Paule probably knew nothing. For many years past suggestions had been thrown out from various well-informed quarters that the quickest and simplest way to finish the war and reduce Tyrone to absolute subjection was by the employment of a Scotch army. The chief official opposition to this scheme had always come from Sir Geoffrey Fenton, who never tired of representing to the Queen's Counsellors the very grave danger of allowing the Scots to establish a firm footing in Ulster. Fenton, of course, was in Tyrone's pay, and he earned his pay by ceaselessly expatiating on the Earl's real but unappreciated loyalty, and by checking, in every other way that was open to him, the growing tendency of the Queen towards drastic measures. When it became no longer possible to maintain the fiction of Tyrone's supposed loyalty, the Earl was officially dubbed Traitor with a capital " T," and was so referred to in all future correspondence ; but Fenton and others continued to earn their pay by advocating periodical truces or cessations, as they were locally called, for the ostensible purpose of allowing the penitent Earl

sufficient time to draw up a suitable submission. Since Tyrone had become an avowed rebel, the indefinite prolongation of these cessations had been the common aim of both English officials and Irish chiefs, with results which the contemporary historian describes as most disastrous. "The rebellion was nourished and increased by nothing more than by the frequent protections and pardons granted, even to those who had formerly abused this mercy, so as all entered and continued to be rebels with assurance to be received to mercy at their pleasure, whereof they spared not to brag; and this heartened the rebel no less than it discouraged the subject."*

With the advent of Burgh came the realization by both chiefs and officials that the old order of things was doomed, and that its place was to be usurped by a régime of dismal rectitude, based on a quixotic desire to bring the rebellion to a conclusion. This last was Burgh's avowed intention, and his common sense quickly made it clear to him that the short road to this end lay in the employment of the Scots in the Queen's interest. Russell had submitted all Angus's offers of service to the English Council, backed by his own recommendations of acceptance, and in the end had brought the English Privy Council round to his own way of thinking;† but the sustained opposition of Fenton and Norris had so far been a bar to anything practical resulting. Burgh, however, who had come over with far fuller powers than Russell, saw no need to refer the matter to England at all. Acting entirely on his own initiative, he signed an agreement under which Angus's two sons, James and Angus Oge, were to bring over two thousand Scots, Donald Gorm another two thousand and Maclean one thousand, or as many more as he could raise. These troops, by the terms of the agreement, were to be in Ulster at the end of September, receiving as pay three hundred pounds for every thousand men for the first month, after which they were to be "cessed" upon the country. They were also to be entitled to half the spoil taken.‡ In signing this agreement Burgh had signed his own death-warrant. His signature on the paper furnished such irrefutable evidence of his determination to end the war that all alike felt that such

* Fynes Moryson, Part II., Chapter II.

† Opinions of Privy Council, Dec. 26th, 1596.

‡ Cal. State Papers, Vol. 205-100. Fynes Moryson, Part II., Chapter II.

an uncongenial element must be got rid of. This step was considered necessary, not only on the grounds of the Deputy's impeccability, but also in order to bring about a cancellation of the agreement with the Scots; for there was not a single leader, either English or Irish, in Ulster but knew that if this were carried through the doom of the rebellion was sealed.

In this emergency Incenduv was sent over, as the representative of the chiefs, to try and persuade her brother Angus to repudiate the whole arrangement. She was commissioned to offer him large sums of money not to send over the men agreed upon. Angus, however, refused all her offers, declaring that all he wanted was revenge on Tyrone for many wrongs, the chief of which was his marriage with Magennis's daughter.* Following on this, while she was over in Cantyre, came the news of the Lord Deputy's death, and the whole arrangement automatically fell to the ground. A sigh of relief now went up from Howth Head to Tory Island. The danger that had threatened the confederacy of interests was averted, and rebel chiefs, Dublin officials and English Captains breathed again. They did more than breathe again, they acted again. The ease and safety with which the troublesome Deputy had been got rid of encouraged an extension of the same methods towards other troublesome persons of the same description. Within less than three months of the Deputy's death Maurice Kyffin met a similar fate, to be followed shortly afterwards by his secretary and successor in office, Henry Tudor. In these last two tragedies there is no evidence of Tyrone's complicity, nor was it suggested that he was a party to the death of either. Although he obviously had an *a priori* interest in the artificial shrinkage of the English bands, there were others whose interests, and whose very lives, indeed, were jeopardized by the incriminating disclosures of the newly-appointed auditors. The man chiefly affected, both in respect to pocket and reputation, was Sir Ralph Lane, the Master of the Musters; and Birkenshaw—who on the successive deaths of Kyffin and Tudor was appointed to their dangerous office—more than hinted that Lane caused the death of both his predecessors, and would gladly make a third victim of himself.†

The known facts surrounding this singular case are by no

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 205-100.

† Birkenshaw to Cecil, Feb. 19th, 1600.

means out of keeping with Birkenshaw's theory. Kyffin, in his letters to England, had more than once made the definite statement that there were plots afoot to kill him, and on January 3rd, 1598, he died mysteriously after a short illness.* The moment he was dead, Lane imprisoned Tudor his secretary,† and used every conceivable threat, and many brutalities, in his fervent desire to extract from the wretched man the secret of where the dead auditor had kept his checks of the Musters. "He was yoked to a post with an iron yoke about his neck, and as many and more irons on his limbs as he could bear, so that he might not possibly lie down."‡ Neither bribes, nor threats, nor tortures, however, could open Tudor's lips, and, at length, after several weeks of the cruellest treatment, a commission arrived from England which appointed him the successor to his late employer. This commission was his triumph, and at the same time his end, for within a few months of his appointment he, too, died suddenly and mysteriously. In the case of these two men there is no actual evidence of foul play; but it is singular, to say the least of it, that the only three honest officials in Ireland should, within the short limits of one year, have succumbed to the mysterious malady known as Irish ague. There is also first-hand evidence that, at the time at any rate, Kyffin and Tudor were supposed to have been poisoned either directly by, or at the instigation of, Lane. Ralph Birkenshaw, who filled Tudor's place after the latter's death, more than hinted that both his predecessors had been murdered. "For as he (Lane) dealt with Mr. Kyffin and Henry Tudor, his man, whom he never left pursuing with his discontent and hatred until death parted them, so he keeps the like bias with me, and would willingly send me after them."§ The reason for Lane's venom against these men, and for his intense anxiety to get hold of the true checks of the Musters, was because Kyffin's disclosures had brought him into such bad odour with the Queen that he was at one time in some danger of losing his head. In his letter to Burleigh of June 8th, 1597, he refers to "the heinous charges brought against him," and thanks Burleigh for having saved him

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 202-1.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 202-22.

‡ Tudor to Burleigh, March 26th, 1598.

§ Cal. State Papers, Vol. 207-124.

“from the deadly stroke of Her Majesty’s indignation very near to have fallen upon him,” from which it is reasonable to infer that Kyffin and Tudor’s audit had brought Sir Ralph Lane into imminent peril, and might even have made a complete end of him had not his two accusers been suddenly cut off.

Lord Burgh’s death caused general joy in Ireland, but it sadly embarrassed Elizabeth, who was sore put to it to find a worthy successor to the dead Deputy. No such man presented himself at the moment, and to fill up the gap Sir Thomas Norris was nominated Lord Justice of Ireland. Norris, who was making a very good thing out of his Presidency of Munster, was by no means too pleased with the proposed change in his life, and wrote such pleading remonstrances on the subject to Cecil, that he was finally allowed to go back to the more congenial rule of Munster. Loftus and Gardiner were then appointed Lords Justices, while Ormonde was given the entire control of the army with the official rank of Lord Lieutenant-General of Her Majesty’s Forces in Ireland.

Nothing could have suited Tyrone better than this arrangement. Loftus and Gardiner had long been in his pay, so that, as far as the civil government was concerned, he had no fears. Ormonde, however, was an unknown quantity. His path and Tyrone’s had so far not crossed, nor had their interests clashed. Yet he was clearly the very first man to be propitiated if the pleasant relations of the past were to be maintained. Tyrone wrote to him in his usual strain, underlining his love for the person of Her Majesty and his fundamental loyalty, and finishing up with the usual petition for a two-months’ truce. Ormonde, in reply, gave no definite undertaking, but promised that he would meet Tyrone at Dundalk in December and talk things over.

Before, however, we come to this much-discussed interview and its results, it would be well first to get level with contemporary events in the north of Ireland. The interest of these is chiefly confined to the neighbourhood of Carrickfergus, where, for some months past, things had been going very far from well with the English. For twenty years past the two North Clandeboy chiefs, Shane McBrian and Neil McHugh, had been alternately rebellious and loyal. If Shane was in rebellion, Neil at once became loyal, and vice-versâ, the aim of each being the acquisition of his cousin’s lands. Encouraged, however, by

the impotence of Norris, and the consequent expansion of Tyrone's tentacles, both these Clandeboye chiefs had simultaneously revolted about the time of Lord Burgh's arrival in Ireland, and had joined forces with Brian McArt and Arthur Magennis, with a view to dividing up the counties of Antrim and Down between the four of them. The combination was, however, heavily defeated in the field by Sir John Chichester, who early in July had taken over the government of Carrickfergus. Under the impotence of the former régime, both the principal fortresses in North Clandeboye had fallen into the hands of the Irish, Shane McBrian being responsible for the capture of Belfast, and Neil McHugh for that of Edenduffcarrick. Of the capture of the first-named place, which was in charge of Ensign Pullen, very gruesome details are furnished by Captain Egerton's servant, Anthony Dering, in a letter which he wrote on the subject to Mrs. Egerton. "Pullen," he wrote, "was as unfit a man as could have been chosen for the place, who, under colour of his charge, robbed the people and took their goods to maintain his drunkenness. When Pullen was drunk at Carrickfergus, his own man, John Aboyless, gave Belfast to the enemy on June 18th. All the English in the garrison were hanged, their throats cut, and their bowels cut out of their bellies by Shane McBrian. Next day, by means of Captain Thornton, the Castle was retaken."* Chichester corroborates the story as far as the killing of the garrison is concerned, but the fort was not retaken, as Dering affirms, next day, but three weeks later, on July 11th. Thornton, as he correctly states, supplied the necessary boats from his ship, and at high tide a landing was effected close to the walls, and the garrison, taken completely by surprise, was easily overpowered and all killed.† At the beginning of August, Chichester followed up this success by retaking Edenduffcarrick. This last achievement appears to have been highly creditable to Chichester, who, in the assault, showed great dash and personal courage, and who also gave evidence of considerable organizing powers. These three successive defeats brought Shane and Neil to their knees, and in company with Neil McBrian Feartagh—who was at the best always a half-hearted rebel—they came into Carrickfergus, and there went down

* Anthony Dering to Mrs. Egerton, June 20th, 1597.

† Chichester to Burleigh, Sept. 16th, 1597.

on their knees in the usual fashion of repentant rebels. Chichester, being new to the country, was in some doubt as to how he should deal with a man who had just disembowelled an entire English garrison, and, in view of all the circumstances, he thought it best to convey the whole party up to Dublin, there to have their various crimes, claims, grievances and quarrels properly adjudicated by others more conversant with the ways of the country than himself. The Dublin award, which seems curiously lenient under the circumstances, was that Neil McBrian Feartagh, whose misdemeanours were of a mild order, should be reinstated in the lordship of South Clondeboye, but that the two grandsons of Phelim Bacagh were for the time being to be incarcerated in Carrickfergus.

The adversity of the two North Clondeboye chiefs was always the opportunity of the sons of Sorley Boy, and the brothers James and Randall were not long in overrunning the now derelict county of Antrim. They had already turned their cousins out of the Glynns, and—mindful perhaps of Donald Gorm's threat to come back and annihilate them—they now completed their former work by demolishing the two Castles of Glenarm and Red Bay,* so as, at all events, to make sure that their avenging cousins should have no strongholds on their return from which to start operations.

In spite of having added the Glynns to their landed estates, neither James nor his brother Randall showed any disposition to take up residence there. Possibly they reckoned the district too near Carrickfergus for safety, or too easily assailable from Cautyre, should Donald Gorm carry out his threat. At any rate, they were content for the moment to destroy the Glynns Castles, and to live exclusively at their picturesque and more inaccessible stronghold of Dunluce, the natural impregnability of which was enhanced by three pieces of brass ordnance, taken from the wrecked Spanish ship *Gerona*, which peered menacingly out from the ramparts. Here they awaited the turn that events might take under the strange direction of a Deputy who valued honour higher than personal gain. All doubts on this score having been settled by his untimely fate, James McSorley no longer hesitated, but openly declared himself on the side of Tyrone; and, in order to cement the newly-formed alliance, organized a raid in force on Magee Island,

* Chichester to Burleigh, Sept. 16th, 1597.

now the property of Robert Earl of Essex. The raid, which took place on November 1st, was entirely satisfactory from the raiders' point of view. Elated with his success, Sir James (he had lately been knighted by the King of Scotland) then moved west, and, taking up a defiant position a mile or so to the north-east of Carrickfergus, proceeded to indulge in a series of provocative manœuvres in full view of the garrison. Such a direct challenge was too much for the patience of so hot-blooded a warrior as Chichester. Leaving half the garrison within the ramparts under command of Captain Charles Mansell, he led out the remainder in the direction of the intruders. His original intention was not to fight, but to inquire the business of the Scots, and to request them to remove themselves to a more convenient distance. On arriving within speaking distance, however, it was suggested to Chichester by Captain Moses Hill, who was backed up by that redoubtable fighter, Captain Merriman, that the Scots were in a very irregular formation, and that the opportunity for a sudden and successful charge should not be wasted. Chichester was only too ready to accept such counsels, and, in spite of the grave warnings of Captain Rice Mansell, at once led the attack. The Scots appeared to give way, but kept up a Parthian fight for some miles, alternatively standing and retiring, till the glen of Altfracken* was reached. Here, in the thick scrub that clothed the sides of the glen, five hundred Scots had been placed in ambush, and these now opened a devastating fire on the entrapped English.† Chichester received two wounds in the body, and was finally shot through the head and fell dead from his horse. Almost every officer in the party was either killed or wounded. Captain Merriman, although wounded in two places, managed to swim across the Olderfleet River, and so escaped. Captains North and Moses Hill and Lieutenant Barry were also among the survivors, and Captain Constable was taken prisoner, but all the rest, including Captain Rice Mansell, were killed. The total casualties approached two hundred, and of the brave force that had sallied forth in the morning, only twelve got back to Carrickfergus that night. The next day, however, some fifty more, who had lain hidden

* Now the Old Mill Glen near Redhall.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 201-63-1.

in reeds and rushes during the night, straggled back to the safety of the town.*

The tale of disaster to the English did not end with the slaughter at Altfracken, for shortly afterwards Captain Merriman, while making his way to Dublin by sea, had the misfortune to fall overboard and was drowned, to the unbounded jubilation of Tyrone, who declared that he would sooner have Merriman's head than the heads of any other forty English in Ireland—a remarkable tribute to the integrity and fighting qualities of Captain Merriman.

* Egerton to Norris, Nov. 6th, 1597.

CHAPTER XXIV

Meeting of Ormonde and Tyrone at Dundalk—Ormonde's extraordinary concessions—Indignation of the Queen—Mountjoy's opinion asked—Captain Lee accuses Ormonde of treason—Lee's character—Tyrone granted an eight months' truce—Desperate condition of the Blackwater garrison—Bagenal's relief expedition—His defeat at Yellow Ford—Plight of the remnant of Bagenal's army—Surrender of the Blackwater fort—Tyrone's magnanimity—Disastrous effects of the Yellow Ford defeat—Spread of the rebellion.

WE can now return to the fateful interview between the Earls of Ormonde and Tyrone, which it will be remembered had been fixed for December. The Protestant Earl of the south and the Roman Catholic Earl of the north met at Dundalk as agreed, the former having the advantage (or the disadvantage) of Sir Geoffrey Fenton at his elbow throughout the proceedings that ensued. Tyrone, as usual, conducted himself with considerable dignity, and, according to the Bishop of Meath, who was present, delivered himself of the following rare and admirable sentiments, as the justification for his rebellious attitude. "By the cross of this sword," he declared, "I look neither for Spain nor Scotland to help me, but I will not have it to be said that I should be counted a perjured wretch to those that I am sworn to, and to leave them in the danger."

The conference lasted four days. Tyrone's original demands were for a two months' truce, and the restitution of O'Reilly (who was ninety years of age) in the lordship of Cavan for the remainder of his life. Ormonde's only condition was that Tyrone should revictual the Blackwater fort during the continuance of the truce. These terms were practically agreed to, and Tyrone was on the point of putting his signature to the contract when Henry Hovenden pulled his sleeve and stopped him.* After a whispered conference between the Irish chief and his English Prime Minister, the following clause was added

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 202-89.

to the treaty : that McMahon, Magennis, O'Hanlon, Maguire and the two Clandeboyne chiefs, Neil McBrian Feartagh and Shane McBrian, should from that date on be Tyrone's urraghs instead of the Queen's, the latter arrangement to be in perpetuity. After a decent pretence of hesitation and discussion, Ormonde yielded the point.

These concessions in effect amounted to a free gift to Tyrone of every point for which the Queen had been so assiduously fighting, with much expenditure of blood and treasure, for over thirty years ; and, in the circumstances, it is not to be wondered at that Elizabeth's indignation, on receipt of the news, was hardly to be restrained. Tyrone, conscious of having gained every point for which he was out, scrupulously carried out his part of the bargain, though by no means to the satisfaction of the hungry Blackwater garrison, who complained that the cattle he sent them were the thinnest ever seen, even in Ulster.

More than ever had the Queen now cause to regret the death of Lord Burgh and the necessity which, in consequence, was once more forced upon her of entrusting her affairs to the hands of intriguing politicians. She complained bitterly, but with perfect justice, that for a few skeleton cows (probably stolen from the English) Ormonde had sold all her interests in Ulster. She further maintained, with equal justice, that there had been no necessity for a parley of any description, as Ormonde had sufficient troops at his disposal to have completely crushed the rebellion, had he so willed. Ormonde's defence was that his troops were physically incapable of undertaking a winter campaign. "The bodies of the men," he wrote, "be so miserable in show as they resemble more prisoners, or men worn out in body and mind with some hard affliction, than soldiers fit to serve a prince." All this may have been as represented, but the explanation failed signally to satisfy Elizabeth, and for many a long day to come the ignominious treaty concluded by Ormonde continued to rankle in her mind. It even survived the effect of a very similar transaction carried out shortly afterwards by her favourite Essex ; for we find her as late as 1601 writing to Mountjoy—who had been in Ireland at the time of Ormonde's negotiations—asking his opinion as to what had actually taken place at the memorable Dundalk Conference. What actually took place on that occasion no one of

course could say, except the two Earls, Geoffrey Fenton and Henry Hoveden, and these were not likely to make public more than suited them. Mountjoy replied in the following enigmatical phrases: "The Earl of Ormonde's parley, I vow on my allegiance to God and you, was without my privity; and so much have I distasted the like in others that, before this accident, I had forbidden it to private captains, and no rebel hath ever yet spoken to myself but on his knees. But if I may presume to yield unto Your Majesty a just excuse for the President of Munster [Ormonde], as it was not in his power to hinder the Earl's parley, so his intention to be present was to do you service by discovering in his manner many jealousies conceived upon good grounds and of great consequence to Your Majesty."*

Ormonde's most persistent accuser over the matter of the conference was Captain Thomas Lee, the value of whose statements was considerably discounted by the fact that, at the time they were made, he was himself lying in Dublin Castle under a charge of treason. Lee, who was the younger son of a very good Cheshire family, was twice tried for treason, but on each occasion acquitted, mainly owing to the good offices of influential friends in England, of whom Essex was not the least. He was a man of remarkable personal courage, and of very high military capacity, but was strongly suspected by many of treasonable complicity with the rebels. His bitterest enemy was Fenton, and his most consistent apologist Lane. He was finally executed in the Tower for a mad attempt to seize the person of the Queen during Essex's abortive revolution.

The substance of Lee's accusation was that Tyrone and Ormonde were in reality partners in the rebellion, the arrangement being that Tyrone's son Hugh was to marry Ormonde's daughter, and that the two Earls were to divide up Ireland between them, Tyrone ruling north of Boyne and Ormonde south of it. This may all have been fiction, but that which stands out as solid fact is that Ormonde subsequently extended Tyrone's two months' truce for a further eight months, without exacting any compensating concessions from the rebel Earl, and, indeed, without stipulating that Tyrone should continue to supply the Blackwater fort with provisions. This eight

* Cotton Collection.

months' extension can by no apologetic ingenuity be construed otherwise than as a deliberate betrayal of the Queen's interests, for, while the Blackwater garrison was gradually starving, Tyrone had eight months' guarantee of immunity from molestation, during which to make preparations for the overthrow of the relieving expedition which he knew must sooner or later be sent. As has already been explained, Tyrone's only real concern in military matters was over the Blackwater fort. It was to him what Constantinople was to Disraeli, the key-position, the sacred inviolability of which overshadowed all outside considerations. That the eight months' extension of the truce to which Ormonde agreed was sought by Tyrone with the sole object of getting the Blackwater once more into his hands is beyond the range of doubt. For ten months from the date of Lord Burgh's death, hostilities had ceased by arrangement with the Queen's acting representatives. During the last eight months of that period the Blackwater garrison had to subsist as best it could. By the end of the ten months it was in the last extremities of starvation, subsisting wholly on the roots and plants that grew on the ramparts of the fort.* Then at last the tardy relief expedition was organized, and by that time Tyrone was sufficiently strong to inflict on the English the worst defeat they had yet sustained in Ireland. This happened in August of the following year, 1598.

On the 12th day of that month Sir Henry Bagenal, the Marshal, rode out of Newry at the head of 3,500 foot and 500 horse for the long delayed relief of the Blackwater fort. Armagh was reached without opposition, and on the 14th the army set out on the final stage of its journey. About two miles north-west of Armagh, in a thickly-wooded spot near the Callan River, locally known as the Yellow Ford, the further progress of the army was found to be barred by a deep trench over a mile in length, which was flanked on either side by impassable bogs. Bagenal had divided his force into six regiments, which marched in column, with very long intervals between the respective regiments—a formation which was afterwards severely criticized. Captain Percy, who commanded the leading regiment, attacked the trench with great gallantry, and actually succeeded in capturing it, but he then found himself completely isolated, and surrounded by vastly superior

* Cox : "Hibernia Anglicana."

numbers of the enemy. Had Bagenal, who was personally present with the second regiment, promptly come up to his support, there can be little doubt that the advantage originally gained would have been maintained. But Bagenal did not come up, except after a long delay. Personal courage had never been the Marshal's strong point; in fact it is not too much to say that he was found deficient in that quality on every occasion when the test was put. Captain Lee had gone so far, after Bagenal's somewhat hurried retirement from the Battle of Glenarm, as to say that the Marshal "was ever held of the world to be a man of most cowardly behaviour." At the Yellow Ford, however, he was destined to make full reparation for all such alleged shortcomings, for, when he did ultimately arrive on the scene, he was at once shot through the head and killed. This was only the beginning of a series of further disasters. The brass saker which accompanied the column stuck fast in a bog; all the oxen dragging it were shot, and it could by no means be extricated. To add to the misfortunes of the Government troops, two barrels of gunpowder exploded, killing a number of men and throwing such as were not killed into hopeless confusion. The new English levies behaved very badly, and all the Irish went over to the enemy the moment they saw which way the tide was setting. The end of it all was that Bagenal's force was utterly routed with very heavy loss. Bagenal himself, and Captains Evans, Morgan, Turner, Street, Leigh, Ellesdon, Banks, Petty, Henshaw, Bethel, Fortescue and Hawes were killed, as was also Mulmore O'Reilly, who, as the Government candidate for Cavan, was on the English side.* Ormonde, in writing to the Privy Council, placed the total losses at 15 Captains, 9 lieutenants, 5 ensigns and 855 rank and file. It is interesting to note that the names of Captains William Warren and Garrett Moore do not appear in the list of casualties. On the other side two of Art McBaron's† sons were killed and a nephew of James McSorley, but the total losses were small by the side of those of the English. Tyrone himself was not present at the fight, the three generals opposed to Bagenal being Hugh Maguire and

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 202, Part III.-20-1; also 28-3 and 34-1.

† Art McBaron does not appear to have had any special military capacity himself, but his sons had a great reputation. Brian McArt was reckoned by Chichester to be by far the ablest leader on the Irish side, and his much younger half-brother Owen Roe made a considerable reputation as a general.

Hugh Roe O'Donnell in command of the Irish, and James McSorley in command of the Scots. Tyrone's absence from the Yellow Ford battle-field did not prevent the Irish panegyrists from giving full scope to their imaginative talents in a patriotic effort to do him honour. In a special epic written for the occasion, they credited him with having killed 50,000 of the English in the battle, taken 3,000 principal captains prisoners, and set free 2,000 notable Ulster chiefs.*

The remnants of Bagenal's army, numbering some 1,500, found their way back as best they could to Armagh, where they fortified themselves in the Great Church, and prepared to resist a siege. Tyrone, however, whose military ambitions never aimed further than the demolition of the Blackwater fort, was content to utilize the predicament of the Government force for the furtherance of the one object which he kept ceaselessly before his eyes. The demoralized mob sheltering in Armagh church was wholly at his mercy. They were for the most part without arms, and wholly without leaders. Tyrone, with the vast concourse of armed men that had gathered to his standard since his victory, had only to attack the church vigorously in order to annihilate those within. The usual engine in such cases was fire. The victorious rebel, however, was content to hold the beleaguered 1,500 under his hand as a cat holds a captive mouse. His irreducible terms were the surrender of the Blackwater fort. If this were yielded, he undertook that the rabble in the church should be allowed to make its way back unmolested to Newry. If it was not yielded they should all die. It seems strange that a handful of starved men in a fort with mud walls—now cut off from all hope of relief—should be more difficult of capture than a church packed tight with 1,500 men; but it must be remembered that the assault of fortified strongholds was a form of fighting to which the Irish were not accustomed, and which it was difficult to get them to undertake. Tyrone had already made one attempt, with all his available forces, to capture the Blackwater fort by assault, but with very unsatisfactory results,† and it is more than probable that he was unable to persuade his men to a second attempt, which he most certainly would not have led himself. The rabble in Armagh church, on the other hand,

* Cal. State Papers, James, 1608–218.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 202, Part II.—105.

was entirely destitute of any effective means of self-defence. If its destruction had been determined upon it could easily have been accomplished, without risk to the assailants, by the simple process of setting fire to the church, which was the method usually adopted in such cases.

So very clear did this appear to the men of the beleaguered force at Armagh that they sent an urgent message to Captain Williams imploring him to save all their lives by surrendering the Blackwater fort to the Earl.* At the same time, the Dublin Privy Council wrote to Tyrone in the most abject strain pleading for his forbearance. A more undignified and humiliating production can hardly be conceived, nor would such a letter have been possible from any but from such as were in close and constant touch with the man whom, in their letters to London, they never failed to allude to as "the Traitor."

Elizabeth's comments on this famous letter were scathing in the extreme. "You of my Council," she wrote, "framed such a letter to the Traitor after the defeat as never was read the like, either in form or substance, for baseness,"† a verdict with which no one who has the curiosity to turn up the document in question is likely to disagree. The whinings of the Privy Council were, as things turned out, unnecessary, for Captain Williams yielded to the supplications of the terrified mob in Armagh church, and gave up the Blackwater fort to Tyrone; who thereupon faithfully carried out his side of the compact, and allowed the remnant of Bagenal's defeated army to return to Newry unscathed. Tyrone's own explanation of an act of magnanimity, which was certainly unusual in sixteenth-century warfare, was that—now that Bagenal was dead and the Blackwater fort in his own hands—he had no special grudge against the rest of the English, and he was particularly anxious to disband his own forces, which cost him £500 a day so long as they were concentrated for action in the field.

The whole incident tends to accentuate the peculiarly defensive character of Tyrone's rebellion. Only once, prior to the arrival of the Spaniards, did he take the offensive against the Government forces; nor did he at any time show a disposition to be aggressive or rebellious in the strict sense, except in the matter of the Blackwater fort, the occupation of which by the

* Fynes Moryson. † Queen to Privy Council, Sept. 12th, 1598.

Government troops was the point at which his indifference broke. Outside of that one contentious point he aimed only at immunity from interference in his dealings with the minor chiefs from whom he extracted his enormous income. In order to gain this financial advantage, he was content to dispense his own and Spanish money with a lavish hand among the civil and military officers of the Government. He seems to have attached supreme importance to the inviolable privacy of the county of Tyrone. The establishment of a Government post at Blackwater he regarded not only as a standing menace to the sanctity of his dominions, but as a slur on his dignity as the O'Neil. It was equivalent in his eyes to the installation of a jailer in the entrance lodge to his private park. The moment, however, that this thorn was extracted from his flesh, either by his own efforts or by the complacency of the English officials, his active hostility towards the Government automatically ceased.

The immediate effect of the Yellow Ford victory was—as may easily be imagined—to enormously increase Tyrone's prestige and to give to the general revolt against English rule a stimulus hitherto undreamt of. The spirit of rebellion quickly overflowed the boundaries of Ulster and Connaught. In Leix and Offally 2,000 O'Moores and O'Connors armed themselves, with noisy demonstrations, and flew the ascendant flag of rebellion. A suddenly-inspired patriot named Donnell Spainagh placed himself at the head of a four-figure army in Wexford, and even as far south as Munster the infection took hold of Lord Mountgarrett,* who got together a force of 2,000 rebels, and invited Tyrone's son Con to come down and place himself at their head.

* Mountgarrett's eldest son, Richard Butler, was married to Tyrone's daughter.

CHAPTER XXV

Increasing power of Tyrone—His army estimated at 30,000—Essex lands in Dublin—His expedition to the south—Essex's renewal of Lord Burgh's contract for Scots—His expedition to the north—Conference with Tyrone at Anaghclint—Suspicious features of the conference—Ingratitude of Essex and Tyrone—Essex's revolutionary schemes—Sir William Warren's disclosures—Essex leaves for England—His appearance at Nonsuch—His arrest and trial—Removal of Sir Arthur Chichester—Sir George Carey's protest—Essex's revolution—His death.

WITH the military forces in Ireland hopelessly disorganized, with no responsible head to the Government, with the official representatives of law and order themselves notoriously unworthy of respect, and with the ball of fate to all appearance at the feet of an exuberant rebellion, the outlook of the century's penultimate year was about as bad as it could be. There is a philosophic cult which holds that to every country no less than to every individual is meted out the exact fortune deserved. If this is sound philosophy, then Ireland's political misfortunes in the sixteenth century would appear to have been no more than the natural outcome of the general low level of social morality throughout the country. It is probable that this level was never lower—even in Fitzwilliam's day—than it was at the close of the year 1598. Every man worked solely for his own profit. Neither public nor private morality had any existence in fact. Religion was merely a pretext for the endowment of indolent and evil-living State-pensioners. Justice was only to be had by payment; when both sides paid, the highest bidder won. No man trusted another, and, like jackals snarling over a carcass, each plunderer grudged his neighbour a share that might otherwise have come his own way. An anonymous lament over the general decadence, published in 1598, gives the following curious description of contemporary society in Ireland :*

“Notwithstanding many wise, godly and virtuous, yet

* See also Appendix A to Introduction Carew MSS., 1589–1600.

there were out of England traitors, murderers, thieves, coseners, coney-catchers, shifting mates, runners-away with other men's wives, some having two or three wives, persons divorced living loosely, bankrupts, carnal gospellers, papists, puritans, Brownists. . . . One great fault they find in the President of the Province [Sir Thomas Norris] is that, if there be just cause of complaint against the Irishry, the President, laying aside English sympathies, favours the Irish more than the English because he [*sic*] brought somewhat in his hand and the English came empty and empty he went away. All the mischief," the writer continues with some inconsequence, "cometh from the high Prelates. Such Archbishops, Bishops, Deans and men of unworthy dignities as no kingdom hath the like, very few learned and reverent ; of the rest some weavers, some tapsters and men of occasion out of England, others mere Irish having neither learning nor honesty, going in mantles and Irish trooses, tippling of ale and aqua-vitæ, getting of bastards and never giving themselves to study or preaching. What shall I say of the baser sort of priests, English and Irish all alike, for the most part lewd and ignorant ? A scholar meeteth one of them and saith, 'Come out of the ale-house, Domine.' He, thinking it was '*quomodo vales Domine,*' answereth '*Ago* [*sic*] *tibi gratias.*' Richard Meredith, Bishop of Leighlin, being charged by an honourable gentleman, Mr. Thornborow—then newly come from England to be Bishop of Limerick—that there was found great fault with him for breach of promise, answered, 'My Lord of Limerick, when you have been here a twelve-month, no man will believe one word that you speak.' Shameless dealings have shameless answers, and such was the corruption of the times. The Bishops have winked for gain at laymen, children, their own kindred and household servants. Fourthly and lastly the corruption of the Government, magistrates and council in general hath caused this plague [the rebellion]. The Irishry desireth no better than a bad cause and a great bribe to give ; than doubteth he not that he shall speed, and such is the nature of them that, when they have corrupted any, they will be first that will betray it."

Lord Mountjoy, on his arrival in Ireland in 1600, gave his own explanation of the degraded state of society in a "discourse" which he published the same year. "The reason

why," he writes, "council, clergy and English inhabitants in this kingdom have been noted of so corrupt a disposition when they live here is because, for the most part, they are in all three kinds such as England rather refuseth."

Pari passu with the steady decadence of official rectitude in Ireland, was the equally steady expansion of the power and prestige of the Earl of Tyrone, and by the spring of 1599 the tide of his fortunes may be said to have reached its high-water mark. He was at that time reckoned to have at his disposal an army of 30,000 well-armed men. The Government army nominally numbered 16,000, but its actual effective strength was not more than half that figure. If Tyrone's attitude had been aggressively ambitious, the moment had arrived when he undoubtedly could have shaken Elizabeth's rule in Ireland to its very foundations. But never do we find this curious rebel really rebelling, and even now, with the forces of occupation disorganized, apathetic and wholly venal, he was content to sit down in the enjoyment of pleasantly-corrupt relations with his nominal enemies.

The rebellion had, in fact, by this time developed into a gigantic conspiracy between the Irish, and the English residents in Ireland, for extracting money out of the two monarchs who financed their respective causes. The Irish defrauded the King of Spain, the English defrauded the Queen of England. The periodical subsidies, which the former provided for the furtherance of the war with England, were used by Tyrone for the purpose of buying peace from England; while the money which Elizabeth was being ceaselessly called upon to find for the maintenance of an army which existed mainly on paper, was utilized by her officers for any other purpose rather than that of prosecuting the war. And so the rebellion dragged on and on in uneventful monotony. Of honour, of chivalry, or of any of the nobler qualities of man there was on neither side any trace. The lower natures of all alike ran riot in a perpetual orgy of treachery and greed. "The wars," wrote the Archbishop of Cashel, "are more fruitful and sweeter to the governors, many great lords, captains and officers than the peace, and thereby the same must continue."

Such was the state of things when in April, 1599, Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, landed in Dublin, after an extremely bad crossing, carrying with him a special commission from the

Queen to substitute straight ways for crooked. Essex's first move was not a happy augury for the future, and was in fact so extraordinary, in all the circumstances, as to raise, from the very first, suspicions in the Queen's mind as to the honesty of purpose of her new representative. Having been sent over with the special object of crushing Tyrone's rebellion in Ulster, he wasted the entire spring and early summer of the year in a pyrotechnic tour of the south, where he accomplished nothing of the very slightest military importance. Essex himself laid the blame of this wasted expedition on the Privy Council, and probably with justice, urging in extenuation of his error that, with his inexperience of the country, he could not well do otherwise than follow the advice of those who had lived there so many years. The letter in which he put forward this excuse was convincing and full of admirable sentiments. Nothing, in fact, could have been more in keeping with the spirit which the Queen was seeking to encourage, than the tone of all Essex's earlier letters to her. His first letter was quickly followed by another, equally plausible, in which he dwelt sadly on the general prevalence of corruption among the officials, and on the weakness and insufficiency of the English garrisons. On the other hand, he made no secret of the immense advantage which any commander in the field who took the initiative, must derive from the inherent reluctance of the Irish to fight in the open; so that, if only dangerous passes were avoided, any objective could be reached without danger of opposition. Finally, he expressed the unshakable conviction that he, and he alone, was the man to carry things through to a successful issue on the above lines.* This last was a covert hit at Charles Blount, Lord Mountjoy, the Queen's latest favourite, who had very nearly succeeded in capturing the post of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland now held by Essex. The latter's faction, however, had proved the stronger of the two, and Mountjoy's government of Ireland was—to the Queen's infinite misfortune—deferred.

It was not till August had very nearly seen its last day, that Essex found himself free to devote his energies to the subjugation of the irrepressible Tyrone. Then—as far as surface appearances went—he acted with becoming decision. One of his first acts was to renew Lord Burgh's contract for the supply

* Fynes Moryson.

of 5,000 Scots. Angus himself was in prison—placed there by his mutinous sons—with whom Essex completed the arrangement.* Having by this admirable stroke provided himself in prospect with an efficient army, he then set out from Dublin, on August 28th, at the head of the motley gathering which represented the argument of brute force in Ireland. Louth was reached on September 4th, and, at Sir Edward Moore's house at Mellifont, those three gravely-suspected officers, Captains Garrett Moore, William Warren and Thomas Lee, joined the staff of the Lord Lieutenant. On the following day the army got as far as the borders of Essex's own Barony of Farney without meeting with any actual opposition.†

As soon, however, as Louth was left and the precincts of Ulster were entered, Tyrone put in an appearance with a sufficiently imposing force, which, for three days, marched *pari passu* with the Lord Lieutenant's army, but without in any way attempting to molest it. Indeed there was no reason why he should do so, for, during the whole of the three days in question, Captains Moore, Warren and Lee were going backwards and forwards between the two armies with friendly communications, but not, as in Lord Burgh's case, without the knowledge of their commander.‡ As a result of these preliminary negotiations, Henry O'Hagan came in on September 7th with a formal request for a parley.§ The proposal was that the two commanders should meet on the following day at the Ford of Anagh-

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 205-100. It is not quite clear from the evidence of the State Papers whether Essex actually renewed this contract or whether he merely pretended to have done so.

† The Barony of Farney in County Monaghan had been escheated to the Crown on the suppression of Shane's rebellion, and in 1575, Walter, Earl of Essex, obtained a grant of these lands, which meant, in plain English, that the chief paid head-rent to Essex instead of to the Crown, as would otherwise have been the case. In the case of Farney the rent paid was £200 a year, and was practically a present from the Queen to Essex of that amount. The granting, however, of Ulster lands to English non-resident landlords, prior to the great Plantation, added very greatly to the difficulties and complications of Government. In 1592 Essex's son Robert gave a three years' lease of the lands to John Talbot, to the great indignation of Ever McCooley Mahon, the native feudal chief, for by this arrangement Talbot became the secondary lord in place of himself. McCooley spent six months in England representing the hardship of his case, but it does not appear that he obtained any redress. On the death of Earl Robert, however, he quietly resumed occupation of the lands, nominally under the young Earl, and with such good results that in 1608 Ever McCooley was reported to be wealthier than all the rest of his name (McMahon) combined. [See Sir John Davies' "Historical Tracts."] Ever died in 1617, after which his son Brian paid £1,500 a year for Farney.

‡ Fynes Moryson.

§ Cal. State Papers, Vol. 205-164.

clint on the River Lagan. Essex made very little pretence of hesitation, having, as afterwards transpired, the very best of reasons for wishing to come to close quarters with the rebel Earl.

Accordingly, on the following day Essex, accompanied by the Earl of Southampton, Sir George Bouchier and Sir Warham St. Leger, rode to the appointed place, where Tyrone was already awaiting them. Conversation at the first was carried on under considerable difficulties, owing to the noise of the intervening stream, and, after a time, Tyrone, finding that little progress was being made, rode his horse up to its girths in mid-stream, and from there, with bared head and hat in hand, delivered himself of the following speech: "Sithens it is not unknown unto your Lordship how I married the sister of Sir Henry Bagenal, and living together, because I did affect two other gentlewomen, she grew in dislike with me, forsook me and went unto her brother to complain upon me to the Council of Ireland, and did exhibit articles against me. Upon this they sent for me, and, because I came not at their first sendings, they proclaimed me traitor before I never meant to go out, and so then I had no choice remaining but to go out and save my head."* It is not to be supposed that the recital of this exhumed fragment of ancient history had any effect upon Essex or his staff, all of whom must have known that it was in substance quite untrue. Tyrone was not proclaimed traitor till fully two years after Mabel Bagenal had left him, and then not in connection with any sworn depositions or secret information laid against him by his wife or any one else, but because of his own overt act of aggression in attacking, and causing a number of casualties to, the Monaghan relief column. Having dealt with his domestic troubles, Tyrone then branched off into another line of argument. He declared himself to be fighting in the good cause of the one and only true religion, of which he was the chosen champion. At this Essex laughed very derisively. "Religion!" he cried, "hang me up, Tyrone; you care no more for religion than my horse."† Tyrone's reply is not recorded, from which it is not unreasonable to assume that he himself joined in the general laugh.

Nothing of any political consequence transpired on this the first day of the meeting, but it was arranged that the two

* Trevelyan Papers. † "Essex's Defence:" Fynes Moryson.

principals should meet again on the following day unattended on either side. At Essex's subsequent trial his participation in this secret conference was one of the most serious charges levelled against him. The Attorney-General submitted that "the parley was suspicious in that it was private and secret, no man suffered to approach, but especially no English."* The practical outcome of the privacy thus afforded was so startling as to raise serious doubts as to Essex's sanity. In the face of the Queen's explicit instructions and on the top of his own very recent and admirable letters, in which he promised the relentless and uninterrupted pursuit of the rebel Earl, he now guaranteed the same rebel Earl that he should not be molested until the May-day following, *i.e.*, for nearly eight months from the date of meeting.

This meeting at Anaghelint between the English and the Irish Earl was not only productive of very far-reaching results, but it had also some curious features outside of politics. Both the Earls concerned owed everything they had in the world to the favour of the Queen. Tyrone she had educated and maintained at her own expense until he came of age, after which she had severely strained poor Tirlough Luineach's loyalty by depriving him of half his territories and handing them over to the favoured young Baron—a high-handed act of partisanship which practically assured the latter's succession to the chieftry.

Essex's high position, no less than Tyrone's, was the outgrowth of Elizabeth's personal favour. His father Walter had died when Robert was a boy of ten, leaving an utterly bankrupt estate, debts of £35,000, and a son whom, with his last breath, he commended to the care and royal patronage of the Queen. Elizabeth responded nobly to the trust. Young Essex was, in quick succession, given high commands in Flanders, France and Spain. He was in turn created Master of the Horse, Master of Ordnance, and finally, in 1597, Earl Marshal of England. After the death of his stepfather Leicester in 1587, he succeeded to that great man's place as Elizabeth's most confidential favourite. The climax of his ambitions was reached when he succeeded in defeating the candidature of Mountjoy for the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland.

At Anaghelint these two men, who had in each case been raised by Elizabeth's hand from penury to the highest pinnacle

* Fynes Moryson,

of their respective spheres, met and, between them, hatched unutterable villainies against the Queen to whom they both owed everything. Of the two, Essex was unquestionably the greater and more despicable traitor. It was made fairly plain by the evidence at his ultimate trial that it was he who, in the first instance, sought the interview. Unlike his predecessors, this Deputy was not in search of petty bribes. His aims were broader and less sordid, but none the less evil. He had, in fact, conceived the insane project of removing Elizabeth from the throne and replacing her by James of Scotland, and the main object of his interview with Tyrone was to persuade the other to create a diversion in Ireland, at the moment when he himself gave the signal for revolution in England. The actual details of the interview never became public, but that Tyrone in the end acquiesced is made quite clear by what subsequently transpired. He himself was guaranteed immunity from attack for eight months, while Essex—having secured the co-operation of the Irish—hurried back to England to complete the final arrangements for his contemplated revolution. That Essex's mad scheme was the main topic of conversation between the two Earls during their parley is beyond the region of doubt. Tyrone was not only informed of the proposed revolution, but, in consideration of his co-operation in Ireland at the right moment, he was promised substantial interests in England under the new scheme. This is made quite clear by the evidence of Sir William Warren. After Essex's return to England, this highly-suspected knight was deputed by the Privy Council to continue and complete the negotiations already entered into by the Lord Lieutenant,* and it was through the disclosures of this emissary that the real subject-matter of Essex's conference with Tyrone became known. Warren reported, among other things, that in the course of his conversation with Tyrone the latter gave vent to the following cryptic utterances, which, at the time, were unintelligible both to Warren himself and to the Privy Council, to whom he made his report, but the meaning of which became quite clear in the light of subsequent events. "By further discourse," he reported, "the said Tyrone told to the said Sir William Warren and delivered it with an oath, that within these two months he should see the greatest alteration and the strangest that he, the said Sir William, could

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 205-214.

imagine or ever saw in his life, but what his meaning was thereby neither did he declare the same to the said Sir William Warren nor could he understand it, more than that Tyrone did say that he hoped before long that he, the said Tyrone, would have a good share in England.”*

Essex was terribly upset when the news reached him that his fellow-conspirator had been so indiscreet as to let out the secrets that had passed between them.† He had already a sufficient number of misdemeanours to answer for, without the addition of this. Apart from other things, his trip to England was in direct defiance of the Queen’s commands, which were that he was on no account to take advantage of his prerogative as Lord Lieutenant, which entitled him to leave the country in charge of a Deputy, but was on the contrary to stay in Ireland until he had her permission to leave. In laying this injunction upon him, the Queen possibly had some inkling of his treacherous designs, and knew that she was safer with the sea between them.

It was suggestive of insanity that, in spite of this explicit command, Essex should suddenly present himself before the Queen at Nonsuch within three weeks of the date of his meeting with Tyrone, and pour into her cold and sceptical ear a wild tale of his heart-broken grief at her non-appreciation of his efforts on her behalf. Elizabeth, to whose credulity and forbearance there were decided limits, listened to his recital calmly, but in high displeasure. On leaving her presence the Lord Lieutenant was at once placed under arrest, and shortly afterwards underwent his trial on charges which were epitomized by Elizabeth as follows: (1.) The disgraceful terms which he concluded with the Traitor. (2.) Speaking alone with him out of hearing of the others at a parley. (3.) Bestowing our offices and honours contrary to our instructions. (4.) Making the Earl of Southampton Master of his Horse. (5.) Wasting his time in Munster instead of going to Ulster. (6.) Issuing great sums of money contrary to our warrant, and for divers other things.‡ One of the “divers other things” was that, during the negotiation of the peace terms, Captain Thomas Lee and Sir Christopher Blount (both subsequently executed in connection with the Essex rebellion) had gone secretly to Tyrone and stayed with him three

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 205-195-1.

† Cal. State Papers. Vol. 205-210.

‡ Queen to Fenton, Nov. 5th, 1599.

days, for which act each of these Captains received, and subsequently produced, a written pardon signed by Essex himself.*

Elizabeth's comments under No. 3 were called forth by the knowledge that Essex had made sixty knights within six months, but the indictment was mainly directed at certain specific acts done in connection with those reprehensible half-brothers, Captains Garrett Moore and William Warren. Both these doubtful subjects, strongly suspected of having been concerned in Lord Burgh's death, and known to have been instrumental in effecting Hugh Roe's escape from Dublin Castle, had been knighted by the Lord Lieutenant, and the latter had actually been appointed by Essex Governor of Carrickfergus in substitution for Sir Arthur Chichester. This last was a very outrageous act, the effect of which would have been to have placed the whole country north of Belfast Lough in Tyrone's hands.

Sir Arthur Chichester had arrived at Carrickfergus in March to take over the command lately vacated by the death of his younger brother John. He had brought with him 500 fresh troops, and a strong determination to extract revenge for the death of his brother. Arthur Chichester—for all the bloody deeds which are laid (and truly laid) to his charge—was known to be a true and loyal man, and one whose family tragedy had placed him clear beyond the reach of any suspicion of intrigue with the rebels. Such a man in such a place would have been a very serious handicap to the treacherous schemes which Essex and Tyrone had hatched at Anaghelint, while, on the other hand, no man could have been better fitted to their purpose than the newly-knighted Sir William Warren. Essex accordingly coolly removed Chichester and put Warren in his place, to the extreme scandalization of Lord Chancellor Loftus, who felt himself inspired by the occasion to once more level at Warren his accusation of being an open traitor to his Queen. The affair, in fact, was too scandalous in all its aspects to be allowed to drop. Sir George Carey, who had recently succeeded Wallop as treasurer, wrote in ill-concealed dismay to Cecil on the subject. "Sir Arthur," he said, "is loth to forego that post, and for my own opinion I think he was able to do Her Majesty best service there." Carey's remonstrance would seem to have produced no immediate result, for in July of the following year we find him writing once more to Cecil, warning him that, since Sir

* Deposition of David Hetherington, Jan. 8th, 1600.

Arthur Chichester had left Carrickfergus, things there had not gone so well as he could have wished.* This second letter seems to have had the desired effect. Burleigh, the Lord Treasurer, was dead, and his son, Sir Robert Cecil, now guided the Queen's Councils. Cecil hated Essex, and, now that the latter was in disgrace, he had no hesitation in rescinding his Ulster appointments. Warren's commission was revoked, and Chichester once more ruled in Carrickfergus.

Essex's trial aroused intense interest in England, both on account of the celebrity of the prisoner, and because of the singular nature of the charges levelled against him. He was tried at York House by his peers, and, being acquitted of the higher charge of treason, was set at liberty, but with the loss of all his public offices. Under this indignity Essex entirely lost what little sense remained to him. He utilized his freedom for no other purpose than that of developing the mad schemes, which he had already formed, for the dethronement of Elizabeth. The rising, when it did come, was suppressed almost without an effort, and Essex's comely head shortly afterwards rolled on the straw on Tower Green. Sir Christopher Blount and Captain Thomas Lee followed their patron to execution.

* Carey to Cecil, Jan. 27th, 1600.

CHAPTER XXVI

Tyrone's curious predilection for foreigners—Matters concerning the succession—Tyrone and Maguire set out for Munster—Massacre of the O'Carrolls' and Sir Theobald Dillon's tenants—Tyrone's quarrel with Maguire—Tyrone's religious enthusiasm—His seizure of Ormonde—Ormonde's imprisonment—Unsuccessful attempts to change his religion—Tyrone and Maguire joined by Desmond—Skirmish at Carrigrohane—Death of Hugh Maguire and St. Leger—Great loss to Tyrone's cause—Lord Mountjoy arrives as Deputy—His ill-health but firm resolution—Sir Arthur Chichester—His policy of extermination—Native precedents for his policy—Sir Henry Docwra—His humane methods of warfare—Expedition to the Foyle suggested by Neil Garv—Docwra takes command—Mountjoy co-operates by means of a demonstration from the south—Consternation of Tyrone—He returns from Munster—His anxiety for a parley with Mountjoy—Mountjoy's steady refusal—He returns to Dublin on rumours of a Spanish invasion—Attack on the Earl of Southampton in the Moyerie Pass.

IT is one of the commonplace aphorisms of life that momentous happenings can often be traced back to very small first causes. Except for Essex's mad revolution in London, Mountjoy would never have been appointed Irish Deputy (for he had died before Essex's natural term would have expired); Tyrone's rebellion would not have been suppressed; the two principal northern chiefs would not have fled the country, and the Ulster Plantation would never have been possible of accomplishment. The duty of the historian, however, is to deal with facts rather than with speculative flights of fancy. Essex did revolt, and the effects of his rising are to-day engraved history.

Tyrone had not the time, even if he had the power, to effect the diversion agreed upon. Essex was in the Tower before the news of his rising had reached Ireland, and Tyrone was not the man to batter his head against anybody else's wall. With the practical opportunism, which was his main characteristic, he devoted the eight months' truce, which had been feloniously granted him, to the perfecting of his own civil and military organization. The opportunity of this long cessation of hostilities may therefore be reasonably taken advantage of in order to take a brief glance at Tyrone's internal Government as it was in the year 1599.

A curious feature in a man, who—according to some—aspired to be King of Ireland, was the predilection which he displayed at this period for the presence of foreigners about his person. Mountfort, his original priest and confessor, had been an Englishman. When Mountfort went to Spain his place was taken by another English priest named Robert Chamberlain.* His Prime Minister and chief counsellor in all political matters was the Englishman Henry Hoveden; the auditor of his accounts, and manager of all his bribes, was another Englishman named Richard Weston,† and his personal bodyguard of 200 picked men were all Scotch—"Argyle men who would run afoot all day long with their furniture as hard as the Earl would ride."‡ The O'Hagans were the only natives in whom he seemed to repose any confidence. This sept, which claimed royal lineage and a descent as old as that of the O'Neils, were Tyrone's foster-brothers and firmly wedded to his cause, not so much as against the English as against any possible revival of the claims of Shane O'Neil's sons, which were still being secretly pushed by the Donnelly sept. There can be no question but that, if Tyrone had met his death at this period, a bloody and promiscuous war would at once have broken out in Tyrone as to the succession. The O'Hagans would have pushed the claims of Cormac McBaron, and the Donnellys those of one of Shane's sons. In addition to the nominees of these two rival factions, there was another highly eligible candidate in the person of Hugh, the eldest legitimate son of the Earl by Joan O'Donnell, who was by many considered the proper person to succeed his father, while other more obscure, but duly qualified aspirants to the succession, were to be found in Tirlough Luineach's two sons and Tirlough Braselagh's sons. Tyrone troubled himself not at all over the possible resurrection of Shane's sons, whom he considered as good as dead, and very little over the question of a succession in which he would take no personal interest. Later on, before the Battle of Kinsale, he did, as a matter of fact, nominate his son Hugh tanist, but this nomination would certainly have been bloodily contested by other claimants, as such nominations always were. So long as Tyrone was alive none of these questions had more than a very prospective interest,

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 218, Part I.—15.

† Capt. Dawtrey to Sir John Fortescue, Sept. 7th, 1600.

‡ Cal. State Papers, Vol. 202, Part IV.—64

for there was no doubt but that he himself was very much the O'Neil. In the spring of 1600 he was even something more than that, for he was perilously near being the uncrowned king of all Ireland from Malin Head to Cape Clear. Dublin was the only county not in acclaimed rebellion.

In the month of February of that year Tyrone, who held the view—by no means uncommon in Ireland—that cessations and truces were only binding on the enemy and not on himself, left Cormac in charge of the northern army, and, in company with Maguire, marched down into County Cork at the head of 5,000 men, harrying, burning and spoiling the tenants of any and all who refused to join him. In Westmeath his patriotism found expression in the raiding, killing and burning of the O'Carrolls' and of Sir Theobald Dillon's tenants.* “All the movable possessions were carried away, and nothing left but ashes instead of corn, and embers in place of mansions. Great numbers of men, women, sons and daughters were left in a dying state,” sing the Four Masters.

The joint expedition of Tyrone and Maguire to the south had a certain political significance, for it marked the reconciliation of these two chiefs, between whom, for some time past, there had been a marked coolness. The coolness arose from exactly the same cause as that which had estranged Tyrone and Hugh Roe, for Maguire—following the example of the O'Donnell—had grown tired of the Earl's daughter and had turned her off. The estrangement which followed, however, was not of a lasting character, and, by the date of the Munster expedition, father-in-law and son-in-law would appear to have arrived at a satisfactory understanding over the matter.

It is by no means clear as to how far Tyrone had knowledge of the impending Spanish invasion, but it is quite evident that he was by this time fully alive to the fact that in any future conflict with the English he would have to rely solely on Irish troops, for—with the exception of Sorley Boy's sons—all the leaders among the Scots had by this time become acutely hostile. He also knew that religion was the only driving force which could consolidate the Irish under his banner, and the only justification which—in case of defeat—he could reasonably put forward for having invoked the aid of England's declared enemy, Spain. He accordingly developed a sudden and convenient

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 207-58.

enthusiasm for the tenets of the Church of Rome, and in this mood marched through Ireland, with Maguire at his side, preaching a Holy Crusade, and supporting his religious beliefs with the usual arguments of fire and sword.

Some idea of the lengths to which Tyrone's new pose was capable of carrying him can be gathered from the incident of the Earl of Ormonde. On April 7th Ormonde was treacherously seized near Kilkenny by the followers of one Onie McRory O'Moore, during a parley with their leader. The Earl of Thomond, who was with Ormonde at the time, barely escaped the same fate, and was wounded by a lance-thrust in the back in breaking away. Ormonde was lodged by McRory in the Castle of Gortnacleagh between Ossory and Leix, but later on was removed for convenience to Sir Terence O'Dempsey's Castle at Ballybrettas. He was well treated, but had for his constant companions Roman Catholic priests, who strove by day and night to change the Earl's religion. The hand of Tyrone shows clearly throughout. He evidently recognized that a united Ireland was impossible so long as the great Leinster Earl remained a Protestant. He accordingly wrote him the following appealing letter, which has a peculiar interest of its own as illustrating the curious way in which the divine and the devilish were jumbled up in Tyrone's superstitious beliefs. "I would rejoice in your good fortune," he wrote to the incarcerated Ormonde, "to be in hand where, without any fear, you may be converted to the Catholic religion, detesting that damnable faith which hereto you have professed; requesting you to accept of imprisonment as punishment due to your offences in times past committed, and to leave off your delays of conversion to Him who shall infernally punish the obstinacy of such as do not accept of His proffered grace."*

Ormonde remained a prisoner till July the 12th, when he was released, but his religion remained unchanged.

On arrival in Cork the two Ulster chiefs joined forces with one James Fitz-Thomas, who—quite illegally—had invested himself with the title of Earl of Desmond. The combined forces accomplished very little beyond the ordinary pillaging and burning. One armed encounter there was which was productive of fateful results. Sir Warham St. Leger and Sir Henry Power—who had been appointed joint commissioners of Munster after

* Tyrone to Ormonde, May 9th, 1600.

the death of the Lord President, Sir Thomas Norris, in August of the previous year*—were riding near Carrigrohane on the River Lee when they fell in with Maguire, who was similarly occupied. We have a number of accounts of the skirmish which ensued, all of which differ materially, after the fashion of such accounts. The Four Masters affirm that St. Leger and Power laid an ambush for Maguire, which in that case must have been very badly contrived, for, according to their return, only one of the Irish was killed as against six of the English. Sir George Carew tells us that only one man was killed on each side. Sir Henry Power, on the other hand, whose account should be the most reliable, seeing that he was present, wrote to the Privy Council to the effect that he chanced by accident upon Maguire, who had 45 horsemen with him and 16 “shot,” *i.e.*, musketeers. In the encounter which followed, between 30 and 40 of the enemy were killed, and only one on the side of the English.† William Meade, Mayor of Cork, practically substantiates this version, though he reduces the number of the Irish killed to 20. These minor details, however, are of little importance. The agreed point is that the two leaders were killed, and the picturesque element in the affair is that they were killed in an old-fashioned hand-to-hand encounter, which proved fatal to both. Maguire was killed on the spot and St. Leger succumbed very shortly afterwards to wounds in the head, thus effectually clearing his reputation of the old charge of complicity with Tyrone.

In this way died Hugh Maguire, after close upon eight years of rebellion. He was incomparably the best military commander among the chiefs of the north, and the only one destined to fall in battle. In spite of the doubts thrown on his courage at the Battle of Belleek, he was unquestionably a brave man, and his death was a fittingly gallant one. All the Maguires of that generation were brave men, and both Connor Roe and his son Brian afterwards did admirable service with Mountjoy’s army. The loss of Maguire was a serious blow to Tyrone’s schemes, so much so, in fact, that, according to the Four Masters, it brought upon him “giddiness of spirits.” This might well be, for neither he nor Hugh Roe could lay claim to any military capacity, or even personal courage in the field, and urgent need had

* Sir Henry Norris died five days after his brother.

† Sir Henry Power to Privy Council, March 4th, 1600.

now arisen for both these qualities in those who would take charge of affairs in the fast-approaching crisis. That a crisis was approaching must have been perfectly clear to all, for there had arrived in Ireland since the beginning of the year three men who—even by this time—Tyrone must have realized could neither be bought nor fooled. This meant that the era of tomfoolery in rebellion was past and done with, and that serious warfare, so long and skilfully postponed, would at last have to be faced.

The three honest men who, by coincidence rather than design, had landed all but simultaneously in Ireland, were Lord Mountjoy, Sir Arthur Chichester and Sir Henry Doewra. The first-named arrived at the Head of Howth at the end of February in the capacity of Lord Deputy, and with his advent an entirely new phase in the history of Ireland may be said to have opened.

Charles Blount, Viscount Mountjoy, was in his thirty-eighth year at the time of his arrival in Ireland. He was a singularly handsome man, with a round, boyish face adorned with a short thick moustache and an "imperial." Fynes Moryson, his secretary, describes him as "tall and of very comely proportions." Indeed, it had been his good looks which at first brought him to the favourable notice of the susceptible Queen, and for once in a way her feminine caprice did not mislead her. In spite of his somewhat curious behaviour after Tyrone's final overthrow—and incidentally after his first personal interview with Tyrone—it may truthfully be said that Mountjoy was not only a thoroughly capable military leader, but an honest administrator. His health was not too good. When he first arrived in Ireland he was far from well, but the strenuous life appears to have suited him, and he soon became more robust. That he had no illusions as to the magnitude of the task that lay before him is made quite clear by the tone of his letters home. He had barely been in Ireland a month before he wrote to Cecil that "the Queen has few subjects in Ireland of any sort who have not some kind an intelligence with Tyrone."*

Sir Arthur Chichester was a very different man from Mountjoy in everything except honesty of purpose and loyalty to his Queen. Some of the methods which he advocated, and indeed adopted, are not easy to defend, even by those to whom his character as a whole is worthy of admiration. He was a younger

* Mountjoy to Cecil, April 3rd, 1600.

man than the Deputy by about three years, and full of an untiring energy. He was a frank apostle of the policy of extermination, and indeed it must be admitted that, at the moment, it was not easy to formulate an alternative policy which was workable, and which would, at the same time, secure for the Queen a peaceful settlement of a country which preferred to be unsettled. Chichester's own views on the subject were quite definite, and he advocated them without any appearance of shame, justifying his exterminating policy by the contention that there was no other way. "The Queen will never reap what is expected," he wrote to Cecil, "until the nation be either wholly destroyed or so subjected as to take a new impression of laws and religion, being now the most treacherous infidels in the world, and we have too mild spirits and good consciences to be their masters. He is a well-governed and wary gentleman whom their villainy doth not deceive. Our honesty, bounty, elemency and justice make them not any way assured unto us, neither doth the action of one of their own nation—though it be the murder of a brother or friend—make them longer enemies than until some small gift or 'buying' is given to the wronged party."* From these premises he argued that where indulgence produced no response but contempt, extreme severity was the only alternative and the only policy which the natives understood or respected.

Chichester certainly lived up to his principles, and some of his punitive raids were very brutal, neither man, woman nor child being spared. The actual number of victims sacrificed in these affairs would appear to have been inconsiderable, for the natives had experienced such raids from the earliest days of Irish history, and had inaccessible hiding-places into which they would disappear at the first note of danger. It is against the principle rather than the fruitfulness of such methods that the mind revolts. Horrible, however, as such indiscriminate massacres must seem to modern ideas, it must not be overlooked, before condemning Chichester, that they represented the traditional methods of the country, and that, in resorting to them, Chichester was merely adopting native customs. Tyrone, for example, as we have just seen, had, without any provocation, raided the O'Carrolls, and left "great numbers of men, women, sons and daughters in a dying state," not because

* Chichester to Cecil, Oct. 8th, 1600.

the O'Carrolls had offended him in any way, but because their lord had refused to join his enterprise. Nor do the Irish Annalists who record the incident see anything but what is proper and natural in the procedure. The custom of visiting the sins of the chief upon the heads of his unhappy serfs was not only invariable, but was recognized as one of the rules of warfare. If O'Neil had a difference of opinion with O'Donnell, his way of expressing his hostility was to send his raiding horsemen into Donegal to massacre man, woman and child, and to carry off everything portable. O'Donnell would retaliate by sending his horsemen to do the like in Tyrone. Very seldom, except by accident, did the two bands of raiders meet and exchange blows. There was a kind of mutual understanding that such encounters should be avoided as far as might be. When they did take place the usual result was so hollow a victory for one side or the other that the victors came off without loss. After Hugh Maguire's death 200 people were killed in the dispute as to the succession between Cuconnaught Maguire and Connor Roe, but these 200 were not combatants, but the inoffensive and defenceless agriculturists whose labours made the country productive. The removal of these impaired the productiveness of the rival's lands, and for this reason they were cut down just as the corn was cut down.

This ruthless native custom is admirably illustrated by the conduct of Neil Garv and his brothers during the operations round Lifford in the Docwra campaign. These three O'Donnells, when invading the territory of Hugh Roe or of Tyrone, spared neither age nor sex. Docwra himself resorted to such measures with the greatest reluctance, and only in the case of extreme provocation, and for this reason his campaigns in the north-west present to the eye of the reader a far pleasanter picture than do those of Chichester in the north-east, but Docwra's native allies were troubled with no such sentimental scruples.

Docwra was the youngest and certainly the most attractive in character of the three men who were destined to bring about the downfall of the rebellion. He had originally been brought over specially from the Low Countries to help Essex in military operations which never took place. The task which ultimately fell to his lot was a far more dangerous and delicate under-

taking than anything which Mountjoy or Chichester had to encounter at the time, and, all the circumstances considered, it must be admitted that he carried it out with singular skill, and—considering the times in which he lived—with commendable moderation. Chichester's methods had *per se* no attraction for him. Instead of aiming at the gradual starvation of the natives, we find him, on the other hand, instructing them in all forms of agriculture, and helping them to reclaim and cultivate waste lands. The Four Masters, on the borders of whose country he chiefly worked, have little to urge against him. Indeed, they epitomize him as “an illustrious knight of wisdom and prudence, and a pillar of battle and conflict.”

The dispatch of an expedition to Lough Foyle was first suggested to Mountjoy in March by Neil Garv and Sir Art O'Neil. These two wrote conjointly, advising, on purely military grounds, that advantage should be taken of Tyrone's absence in Munster to establish a strong Government force on the Foyle. In neither case was the advice wholly disinterested. Neil Garv, who was the eldest survivor of Calvagh's nine sons, aspired to usurp Hugh Roe's position as the O'Donnell, while Sir Art thought that the title of O'Neil would sit more suitably on himself than on the Earl of Tyrone. They each undertook to join any English force which might be sent with a considerable muster of their own men. The obvious merits of the scheme—provided a good man was in charge—strongly appealed to Mountjoy's common sense, and early in May Sir Henry Docwra was relieved from the Government of Connaught, and sent off from Carrickfergus with a fleet for the Foyle. At the same time Mountjoy himself made a demonstration in force towards Newry, so as to occupy the attention of Tyrone's forces till Docwra should have had time to establish himself firmly on the Foyle.

Tyrone was much upset by these aggressive tactics, which threatened his sanctuaries simultaneously from north and south, and he came back post-haste from Munster, arriving in time to take over command of the Irish army, which was, as usual, hovering on the flanks of the Government force. A few insignificant skirmishes followed, but nothing in the nature of a serious engagement, though Mountjoy lost no opportunity of trying to provoke a battle. Tyrone's aim was, as usual, for a parley, and for this he pleaded earnestly and persistently

with his new opponent. Mountjoy, however, acting under very definite instructions from the Queen, who now knew only too well what parleys with Tyrone meant, declined for one moment to entertain any such proposal. He had come, he explained, to fight and not to talk, and the former he was always ready to do, but not the latter. Tyrone must have known that in these words lay the doom of his rebellion, and Mountjoy must also have known that they carried with them a very grave danger to himself. Lord Burgh's untimely fate, however, had not been without its value as a warning to his successor, and the new Deputy took good care to surround himself as far as possible with such as were free from the taint of underhand dealings with Tyrone.

As soon as Mountjoy was assured of Doewra's safe arrival at the Foyle, the main purpose of his expedition was accomplished, and he prepared to return to Dublin; for the rumour of a contemplated Spanish invasion of the South of Ireland was by now too persistent to be ignored. The main body, numbering 1,000, made the passage of the Moyerie Pass on May 19th without hindrance from the enemy, but the Earl of Southampton, who had been sent on two days ahead with 500 foot and fifty horse, under Captain Blaney, was less fortunate, being subjected to annoyance from end to end of the Pass, but without suffering many casualties. Southampton's own behaviour in this affair appears to have been particularly gallant, for Fynes Moryson records that on one occasion he charged 220 of the enemy with only six horse, and "drove them back a musket-shot."

CHAPTER XXVII

Doewra reaches the Foyle—Friendliness of Art O'Neil and O'Dogherty—Tyrone's arrival at Strabane with five thousand men—His understanding with Fenton—Letters from Captains Willis and Dawtrey—Tyrone's singular inaction—Epidemic in Derry—Doewra's explanation—Hugh Roe carries off sixty horses—Doewra wounded in the pursuit—Treachery of McSweeney Dogh—His arrest and escape—Rory O'Cahan's attempt to betray the garrison—His capture and execution—Neil Garv—Doewra's difficulty in dealing with him—Death of Art O'Neil—Character of Cormac O'Neil—Attack on Derry repulsed by Lieut. White.

SIR HENRY DOCWRA'S expeditionary force to Lough Foyle reached Culmore fort at the mouth of the Lough without mishap. Here Doewra remained six days repairing the fort, which he finally left in charge of a garrison of 600 men under Captain Olphert, and thence marched to Ellaugh Castle, which O'Dogherty had begun to pull down, after the fashion of the natives when they abandoned their strongholds. Here he left 150 men under Captain Ellis Flood to effect repairs, and with the remainder of his force marched on to Derry. The importance of the expedition, which completely overshadowed anything hitherto attempted in the Foyle, aroused an intense excitement in the district. Most of the minor local chiefs, exhilarated by the prospect—always dear to the Irish mind—of upsetting the existing order of things and substituting something else, were tentatively friendly. The only notable exception was Neil Garv, who—after having invited the expedition—now held aloof and behaved in a very foolish and unreasonable way. Sir Art O'Neil, on the other hand, gave the English a most cordial welcome to the land of the north, and hospitably invited Doewra to come and see him at Dunalong. Doewra replied shortly that he was much too busy to cross the water, and that if the candidate for the chieftry of Tyrone wanted to see him, he must come to Derry. This Sir Art agreed to, and arrived at the new settlement on June 1st, very glad to escape the attentions of Cormac

McBaron, who was on his heels with anything but friendly intent.*

O'Dogherty was next interviewed, and—in view of the fact that the invaded country was his—Doewra made the concession in his case of marching out some three miles from Derry to meet him. The Governor took with him Captains Willis and Thornton and 1,000 men, mainly for purposes of effect. Nothing resulted from the interview, as O'Dogherty proved intensely suspicious and refused to talk except to Doewra's private ear, a condition which the latter—in obedience to orders received from Mountjoy—declined for one moment to entertain. The first overt act of hostility to the English came, as might be supposed, from Hugh Roe, who—more with the idea of registering an official protest than from any hope of success—swept down on Derry with 500 light horse, but without, in any way, incommoding the new settlement. This demonstration was shortly followed by another on a much larger scale, under the command of Tyrone himself, who, from the moment when he was relieved from the pressure of Mountjoy's presence at Newry, had given his undivided attention to the more serious danger which threatened from the north. Accompanied by Hugh Roe, Cuconnaught Maguire, O'Connor Sligo and O'Rourke, with all the forces which they could command, estimated by Doewra at 5,000, he arrived at Strabane on June 3rd. Doewra made preparations for resisting a determined siege, but the Irish force was not disposed to attack, and, after spending some days in Tirlough Luineach's now ruined and deserted town, dispersed without unsheathing their swords.

Whether this singular hesitation on the part of Tyrone was due to his natural timidity or to advice received from further south, is not clear. The only fact as to which there is no doubt is that Tyrone was in constant communication with some of the members of the Dublin Government during the whole of his stay at Strabane. Captain Willis's information on this point was so conclusive that he thought it worth a letter to Cecil. "There hath come to Tyrone since his coming to Strabane," he wrote, "letters and messengers from some men of the English Pale which are near the State. I have laid out to have a certainty of it." Captain Dawtrey wrote in

* Capt. Willis to Cecil, June 4th, 1600.

the same strain quite independently of Captain Willis, and from another part of the country. "The Deputy," he reported, "is a marvellously temperate gentleman, and very affable, but I fear me that Tyrone's faction here [*i.e.*, in Ireland] have gotten a strange possession of him, and that they do abuse him with their cunning, whereby the rebellion will stand long and put Her Majesty under great charge." He finishes up with the assertion that Fenton and Tyrone are in daily correspondence through means of Richard Weston.* This seems to establish beyond doubt that the man in Willis's mind was no other than Fenton. It is probable that this crafty intriguer warned Tyrone that there were matters pending which required his attention further south, for it is difficult otherwise to account for Tyrone's surprising inaction. The Derry settlement threatened the privacy of his dominions just as effectually as did the Blackwater fort, and, in fact, more so, for the victualling of the former by sea was a far easier matter than the victualling of the latter by land. However that may be, the fact remains that, after shaking a threatening fist for some days, Tyrone disbanded his forces and turned his back on Doewra's enterprise.

Before leaving the subject of Fenton, it is interesting to note that Mountjoy himself had no illusions as to the real character of the Permanent Secretary, for in January, 1603, we find him penning the following significant letter to Sir George Carey, the Treasurer, another official who was popularly reported to have amassed much ill-gotten gain during his term of office: "I have, at your earnest desire, signed a warrant for Sir George Fenton for £100 (for payment of spies), although, as you remember, he had a concordatum for £100 from me very lately for such occasions. I pray God his intelligence be worth it, for, by God, I would not give three farthings for any I received by his means since I came into Ireland."

Doewra's most formidable foe at the moment was disease. The Irish were wont to say that their four best captains were Captain Hunger, Captain Travail, Captain Toil and Captain Sickness, and on this occasion certainly the last-named proved their most effective ally. The Derry garrison contracted a strange disease, from the effect of which all were more or

* Capt Dawtrey to Sir John Fortescue, Sept. 7th, 1600.

less incapacitated, and many died. Doewra was much perturbed by this epidemic, and wrote in apologetic strain to Cecil: "The cause of these mortalities I know will be required; I can ascribe it to nothing but the distemperature of the air, which I assureth your honour exceedeth all credit to such as feel it not." If Doewra's explanation was correct, the climate must have marvellously changed in the last three hundred years, for it is hard to conceive of a healthier spot than modern Derry. It was the convenient fashion of the day to ascribe all sickness among the troops to the malignity of the Irish climate, which was supposed to breed mysterious maladies. The truth was that in the majority of cases the sickness arose from the excesses of the soldiery, coupled with a complete ignorance of the first principles of hygiene. The Derry epidemic does not seem to have been a long-lived affair, and by the time summer had set in we hear no more complaints of sickness or even of climate.

At the end of July Hugh Roe's rebel bands scored their first success, for they managed to steal sixty* of the garrison horses, with the connivance of McSweeney Dogh (the chief of the Dunfanaghy district), who was inside the walls as Doewra's ally, and who let the horses loose by previous arrangement with Hugh Roe. Doewra was quickly on their track with a hurriedly raised band of twenty mounted men, with which he overtook the raiders before they had covered many miles, but he was unable to recover the prey, he himself being struck in the forehead by a javelin thrown by Hugh McHugh Duv, and so badly wounded that the pursuit had to be abandoned.†

McSweeney's treachery in the matter was fully established by a letter written by him to Hugh Roe, which Doewra managed to intercept, and he was at once placed under arrest. Doewra, being still new to his position and not on the best of terms with the Lord Deputy, showed more hesitation in dealing summarily with a case of this sort than he did later on. He determined to pass the responsibility on to his superior, and, as a ship was on the eve of sailing for Dublin, McSweeney was placed on board and confined below hatches, with a view to taking his trial at the Metropolis. The hatches, however,

* According to the Four Masters the number of horses captured was 200. Doewra's figures are, however, the more likely to be correct.

† Four Masters.

were afterwards opened to take on board some beer, and this seemed to McSweeney a favourable opportunity for avoiding a ceremony which naturally had little attraction for him. He accordingly leaped on to the deck, flung himself into the water, and—being a strong swimmer—got away, before any pursuit could be organized, to O’Cahan’s shore, where, with a derisive yell, he disappeared into the underwood.*

McSweeney Dogh had originally gained Docwra’s favour and confidence by bringing in a hundred of Hugh Roe’s cattle. On August 19th, Rory O’Cahan (O’Cahan’s brother) tried the same tactics. He arrived in Derry with forty men and sixty fat beasts. Docwra paid him for the beasts and sent him for more, which he produced. Having in this fashion established, as it were, his footing, Rory then asked for 800 men, with which he undertook to overcome his brother Donnell, and place the entire Coleraine country under the rule of the Queen. Sir Art O’Neil, who was in Derry at the time, fortunately warned Docwra against trusting Rory, whom he described as a notorious traitor. Docwra accordingly refused him the men, and accused him to his face of intended treachery, but allowed him to go free on depositing two pledges for his good conduct. Rory went off humbly enough, but the very next day appeared on the opposite shore with 300 men, and shouted across insulting defiance at Docwra and all Englishmen generally, adding, at the same time, that, if his pledges were hanged, he would kill every Englishman that fell into his hands thereafter. Docwra’s reply was to erect a gibbet on the rampart and hang the two pledges in full view of their depositor, who could hardly have expected any other issue.†

Rory did not live to carry out his threat. Three months later, Docwra, in obedience to orders received from Mountjoy, sent Captain Orme over the water by way of Greencastle, while he himself crossed at Lifford. The two then worked towards one another on the far side, destroying all the corn-stacks as they went, and while engaged on this work came suddenly upon Rory, who was captured and immediately hanged for his past treachery.‡ It afterwards transpired that the 800 men he had asked for were to have been led by him into a prepared ambush, by arrangement with Tyrone.

* Docwra to Cecii, Aug. 29th, 1600.

† Docwra Narration. ‡ Fynes Moryson.

At the end of August Captain Hart arrived in the Foyle with reinforcements of men and horses, and Doewra found himself strong enough to split his forces. He himself kept 300 men at Derry, and sent 400 under Sir John Bowles, his second in command, to Dunalong to support Sir Art O'Neil, whose own force consisted of forty Irish only.

Neil Garv, who so far had proved very difficult and contradictory, now came in and made an offer to form an offensive and defensive alliance with the English if he was guaranteed the chieftry of Donegal, freedom of religion and the right to select his own sheriff. To these conditions Doewra agreed in substance, though with certain diplomatic reservations as to Neil Garv's future conduct. At the same time, "as a token of his love," he sent him a hat, a piece of kersey and a piece of khaki.* Neil Garv afterwards claimed that his terms were agreed to unconditionally, and on the subsequent non-fulfilment of the first condition, which stipulated that he should rule Donegal "in as ample a manner as his grandfather, Calvagh," he managed to build up an imperishable grievance. The next chief to come in was O'Dogherty, whose condition was that he should have Ellaugh Castle (in the parish of Templemore) as soon as it had been rendered defensible, and that he should also have the catering contract for the Derry garrison. Both these points were agreed to, and O'Dogherty at once took up his new duties as caterer, but his prices proved so hopelessly exorbitant that the arrangement was not of long duration, a development from which he in turn was not slow to manufacture a grievance.

Doewra had now three important native allies to back him up, but it was not long before he began to experience more trouble from his Irish confederates than from his Irish enemies. Sir Art O'Neil, who had lived his entire life in penurious obscurity, now became so elated with his sudden access of prosperity that nothing could be done with him. Doewra, who had received special instructions from the Government to exploit this son of Tirlough Luineach as the prospective O'Neil, wrote in despair to both Mountjoy and Cecil, complaining that he was quite impossible to deal with on account of his unreasonable rapacity. Mountjoy was not surprised. "That Sir Art O'Neil is discontented," he wrote to Cecil,

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 207, Part V.-53.

"is no wonder; for even the best of this people, out of all their extreme pride and over-valuing themselves, are never satisfied."* The problem, however, as far as Sir Art was concerned, was quickly solved by his death. He was seldom sober, and in October died "of too many carouses on his wedding-day."† The moment Art was dead, his brother Cormac came in, claiming all the privileges which had been conceded to his elder brother. Cormac proved a very superior character in every respect to Art, and Docwra at the first had great hopes of him. He is described as "of a mild, honest disposition, willing to serve without grating beggary and unreasonable demands, but little less barbarous than the better sort of wood-kerne."‡ The Governor's chief difficulty lay in the inveterate hatred of all his three Irish allies for one another. Each in turn ceaselessly accused the other two of being traitors and spies working in the interest of Hugh Roe,§ so that the difficulty of knowing which to believe and which to trust was more than a little disconcerting.|| Docwra very wisely began by distrusting them all, but gradually changed his opinion with regard to Neil Garv, whom, at the end of the year, he had pronounced to be trustworthy, though intensely difficult to deal with. Unfortunately, however, this first favourable impression did not stand the test of time.

The actual fighting so far had been insignificant, the only relief from the monotony of daily routine arising from an attempt at a surprise attack on Derry by "a hundred" (*i.e.*, a fair-sized party) of Hugh Roe's men; this happened at the end of September. The night was a very dark one, but the watch was well kept, and Lieutenant White, who was on guard with twenty mounted men, quickly got the alarm, and, hurrying to the threatened spot, charged and dispersed the assailants, who left fifteen of their number dead on the ground.¶

* Mountjoy to Cecil, Oct. 27th, 1600.

† Capt. Willis to Cecil, Oct. 27th, 1600. See also Chichester to Cecil Oct. 29th, 1600.

‡ Sir John Bowles to Cecil, Dec. 1st, 1600.

§ Sir John Bowles to Cecil, Nov. 1600.

|| Fynes Moryson.

¶ Docwra Narration. In his letter of Oct. 1st to the Privy Council Docwra says White had eight men with him and killed two, but the revised figures in his later Narration may be accepted as the more correct.

CHAPTER XXVIII

Mountjoy's energy—He reaches the Moyerie Pass—Unprecedented rain—Description of Tyrone's defences—Their capture by Capt. Williams—Connor Roe escapes from Tyrone—Mountjoy's good opinion of him—English casualties in the Moyerie—Mountjoy returns to Dundalk—He returns to the attack—Disappearance of Tyrone's opposition—Mountjoy cuts down the trees—He reaches Newry unopposed—Establishment of new fort at Mount Norris—Attack by Tyrone's men—Too much whisky—Mountjoy returns to Dundalk *via* Carlingford—Fight at Ballyonan—A price is placed on Tyrone's head.

THE energy which had characterized Mountjoy's earlier movements proved no mere flash in the pan. He quickly gave evidence of a determination to allow the rebel Earl no respite from his attentions. In October he made an effort to bring matters to a climax. This he hoped to achieve by a concerted movement which aimed at attacking Tyrone simultaneously from north and south, while Chichester co-operated from the Carriekfergus side. In furtherance of this scheme, he left Dundalk on the 20th with 1,700 foot and 140 horse, and encamped at the Faughart Hill, at the entrance to the famous Moyerie Pass. Tyrone, quite alive to the importance of the occasion, had lined the pass with an army of 3,000 foot and 300 horse, and that he recognized the gravity of the situation is made evident by his announcement to his followers that, if the Deputy once reached Newry, Ulster was as good as lost.* On this occasion the Deputy was not destined to reach Newry, for it rained without cease for ten consecutive days from the moment of his arrival at the Moyerie, the downpour being the heaviest in the memory of man for thirty-seven years.† Following the same tactics which had proved so successful in the case of Bagenal's ill-fated expedition from Armagh, Tyrone had dug two parallel lines of trenches from wall to wall of the pass, the second line being just beyond

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 207, Part V.—84.

† Sir F. Stafford to Cecil, Oct. 4th, 1600.

the Four Mile Water, *i.e.*, the ford on the Kilmory River, four miles from the camp.* “From mountain to mountain, from wood to wood, and from bog to bog,” Mountjoy wrote to the Queen, “were long traverses, with huge and high flankers of great stones mingled with turf, and staked on both sides with palisades wattled.”† Formidable as these two lines of trenches appear to have been, they were both captured by that admirable soldier, Captain Williams, of Blackwater fame, in a perfect deluge of rain on September 25th, the defenders abandoning the position without putting up any fight. A number of arms and a considerable stock of provisions were captured, but the trenches themselves were not held, as they were too far ahead of the transport and baggage, which the weather had rendered immovable. On October 2nd there was another brisk skirmish, in the confusion arising from which Connor Roe’s son Brian, who was a prisoner with Tyrone, escaped and came over to the English side, where he rendered such good account of himself as to “kill two rogues with his own hand.”‡ Not only did he effect his own escape, but, in coming across, he managed to compel the attendance of Cormac McBaron’s eldest son, whom he brought in triumph to Mountjoy’s camp and subsequently sold to the Deputy for £50.§ Connor Roe himself had been with the Deputy’s force from the outset, and he, too, was reported to have acquitted himself right well and nobly in the fighting. Mountjoy had a very high opinion of the elder Maguire. “The old man,” he wrote to Cecil, “is the only honest Irishman that I have yet found since my coming hither, and, believe me, Sir, the wisest man that I have known of his nation.”||

The skirmish on the 2nd was productive of nothing definite in the way of results. On the English side Captain Rush and Lieutenants Willis and Jackson were killed, the other casualties in all amounting to about a hundred. On the 5th, which was the first fine day experienced since Dundalk had been left, the fight was renewed. Sir Charles Percy and Sir Oliver St. John, with their companies, scaled the crags on the left of

* The site of these trenches is between Aeton and Poyntzy Pass.

† Mountjoy to the Queen, May, 1602.

‡ Mountjoy to Cecil, Dec. 12th, 1600.

§ Mountjoy to Privy Council, Dec. 11th, 1600.

|| Mountjoy to Cecil, Dec. 12th, 1600.

the pass and put the opposing forces to flight, but they sustained some losses in doing so, Sir Robert Lovell being shot through the head and Lieutenant Brereton being also killed. The casualties in killed and wounded on the English side now amounted to 250,* and, though the actual fighting had been in their favour, the tactical victory rested with Tyrone, for on October 7th the Deputy was forced to return to Dundalk.

The curious passivity of Tyrone's methods were now once more exemplified by the fact that, after Mountjoy had retired to Dundalk, Sir Samuel Bagenal's contingent was allowed to return to Newry (*i.e.*, to move towards the north) through the Moyerie Pass without molestation, though Tyrone was throughout on the heights above, watching the proceedings. Sir Samuel was a cousin of the late Marshal, and a man whom, beyond all others, except Chichester, Tyrone—as a true patriot—should have hated, for his methods were fully as brutal as were those of the Carrickfergus Governor; and yet he was allowed to pass unhindered with a small force which Tyrone's big army could easily have overwhelmed.† Still more curious was Tyrone's subsequent action, or rather inaction, in the Moyerie Pass itself, for ten days later, when Mountjoy, having reorganized his force, renewed his attempt on the Pass, he found every conceivable artificial obstacle barring his way, but no armed opposition. Taking advantage of this all but providential opportunity, Mountjoy made most deliberate progress through the Pass, cutting down the trees on both sides as he went, so as to ensure that any future fighting between Dundalk and Newry should at any rate be done in the open. On October 27th, he and his army reached Newry. There is no explanation of this extraordinary neglect of opportunity on the part of Tyrone except on the assumption that he had not yet read Mountjoy aright, and hoped by such kid-gloved methods to cajole him into the customary parley. If this was his expectation, he was doomed to disappointment, for on this point Mountjoy remained immovable. Hugh Roe subsequently upbraided his chief most bitterly with having grievously bungled the whole affair.

* Sir George Carey to Cecil, Oct. 9th, 1600; see also Sir F. Stafford to Fenton, Oct. 6th, 1600. The Four Masters, in their account of the affair state that "countless numbers of their gentlemen, officers, recruits and attendants were slain."

† Samuel Bagenal was not held in high repute even by the English, and he was shortly afterwards relieved by Mountjoy of his command.

After resting for a week at Newry, Mountjoy set out towards Armagh, with the idea of selecting some half-way spot which would act as a connecting link between these two places, and so facilitate the advance of expeditionary forces working towards the Blackwater. He found an ideal spot near Aughnagrane, about eight miles from Newry, where there was an old Danish tower and a fine spring of water. While Mountjoy was engaged in making a peaceful survey of this favourable spot, his force was suddenly attacked with terrific yells by Tyrone's men. The surveying party was taken so completely by surprise that serious consequences might have followed if the Earl, in his anxiety to stimulate the military ardour of his men, had not so overdosed them with whisky—or *aqua vitæ*, as it was then called—that the majority measured their length before coming within striking distance, and remained where they fell, incapable of moving.* The most important prisoner taken in this ignominious fashion was Neil O'Quinn, and he was so drunk that it was twenty-four hours before he could speak at all.

Mountjoy decided to christen the new fort Mount Norris. Four hundred men, under Captain Blaney, who is doubtfully described as "a very worthy and painful gentleman," were left to carry out its construction. On November 12th Mountjoy returned to Dundalk *via* the Narrow Water and Carlingford, a route by the adoption of which the fatal Moyerie Pass was avoided. Mountjoy, however, had other reasons for his decision, the chief of which was that there was an abundance of provisions at Carlingford, while Dundalk and Newry were eaten bare. All his force was accordingly transferred across the water in small boats, after which he set out along the sea-shore towards Carlingford. While yet two miles short of that place, but after passing Ballyonan, he was attacked by Tyrone, who had erected two strong barricades from the woods to the sea, and who had four hundred men posted on the steep wooded slopes which commanded the barricades.† From these slopes a wild fusillade was opened on Mountjoy's men the moment they set to work to break down the obstacles. The English troops, who behaved extraordinarily well in a very trying position, replied as well as they were able in the absence of any visible enemy. In the end the barricades were success-

* Sir Griffin Markham to Cecil, Nov. 8th, 1600.

† Fynes Moryson.

fully removed and the army proceeded on its way, but fifteen of the English were killed and fifty wounded in the process, Mountjoy's secretary, Cranmer, who was shot close by the Deputy's side, being among the former.*

Mountjoy was greatly incensed by the loss of his men, and especially by the death of his secretary—so much so, in fact, that on arrival at Dundalk he at once issued a proclamation offering a reward of four thousand marks for Tyrone alive and two thousand for him dead. It speaks much for the sanctity in which the O'Neil's person was held by the natives that, as far as is known, no one of his followers made any attempt to take advantage of this offer.

With the return of the army to Dundalk, Mountjoy's first serious campaign against the rebel Earl may be said to have closed.

The results actually achieved were small, and yet, small though they were, of supreme military importance, for the establishment of the new fort at Mount Norris was the first nail in the coffin of Tyrone's rebellion.

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 207, Part VI.—25.

CHAPTER XXIX

Capture of Lifford by Sir John Bowles—Neil Garv is left in command—Neil Garv's many enemies—Hugh Roe attempts to retake Lifford—His two successive failures—Death of Manus O'Donnell—Death of Hugh McManus—Hugh Roe's brutal act of revenge—Neil Garv and his brothers raid Newtown—Hugh Roe's attempt on Culmore Fort—Attempted intrigue with Captain Olphert—Hugh Boy McDavitt—His character—Description of Derry—Spanish ships at Killibegs—Death of Sir John O'Dogherty—Phelim Oge and Cahir contend for the succession—Shortage in the Derry musters—Docwra's explanation—McSweeney Fanad—His revolt and submission—The custom of "pledges"—Docwra's native allies—Their characters—Neil Garv goes to Dublin—His views on social questions—Tyrone attempts to raid Dunalong—His failure and precipitate flight—Capture of Newtown, Castle Derg and Omagh.

IN the meanwhile events at Derry were progressing smoothly and uneventfully, but, from the English point of view, quite satisfactorily. The first act of expansion on the part of the settlement was the capture of Lifford. This was achieved by Sir John Bowles, who left Derry on the evening of October 8th with five hundred foot, including one hundred and twenty Irish under Neil Garv, and, after marching all night, arrived opposite Lifford at 9 a.m. on the following morning. Hugh Roe's garrison was apparently taken completely by surprise; the fort was captured with but little opposition and the garrison put to the sword.* The fort, which was in the form of a triangle surrounded by a deep fosse and a rampart, contained some twenty houses, which, now that winter was approaching, afforded a welcome addition to the house accommodation of the army.

Neil Garv, to his great delight, was left in command of Lifford, being thus reinstated in his family heritage after many years of enforced residence at Castle Finn. His establishment at Lifford had something more than a sentimental value to this homeless Ishmaelite, who at the moment was in extremely bad odour with the majority of his own people. Hugh Roe, whom he

* Docwra to Privy Council, Nov. 2nd, 1600. Other accounts state that they all fled and were not pursued.

was trying to supplant, was very naturally his implacable foe and had placed a price on his head. Hugh Roe's mother, Ineenduy, was no less furiously hostile, and certainly no less to be feared. That dangerous and energetic lady's two main residences were at Mongavlin and at Carrigans, and though Doewra's proximity had compelled her to shift her quarters further south, her influence was still strong enough in and around those places to cause uneasiness to a man who had no ramparts round him, and who had not forgotten the murder of his two brothers. Not content with the active hostility of Hugh Roe and his mother, Neil Garv had recently still further excited the family hatred by most unwisely killing his uncle Nachten "in a drunken fury,"* a deed for which retaliation in one form or another might reasonably be expected. In all the circumstances, then, the shelter of a strong fort was not to be despised.

Apart from its value, sentimental or protective, to Neil Garv, Lifford was a distinct acquisition from the general military standpoint, for not only did it command the only passage into Donegal across the River Mourne, but it also dominated the town of Strabane on the opposite bank. Strabane, it is true, was in ruins, having remained in that condition ever since Tyrone had demolished it in 1595, but it still had a certain political importance as the recognized headquarters of Tirlough Luineach's descendants, who at the moment were the Government favourites for the title of O'Neil. Cormac, indeed, offered to rebuild it if Doewra would provide him with the necessary masons, but this did not prove practicable at the moment, and the idea was abandoned.

Hugh Roe made two efforts to capture Lifford, one on October 17th and another on the 24th, but in each case he was beaten off by Neil Garv. On the first of these occasions Neil Garv very seriously wounded Hugh Roe's brother Manus O'Donnell, whom he transfixed under the arm with a long lance. Manus was carried on a litter to Donegal, where he died on October 22nd. His old father Hugh McManus, who for many years past had been quite doting, died six weeks after his son.†

Hugh Roe was so enraged by his defeat and by the death of his brother, that he rode straight away up to Castle Finn,

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 207, Part V.-120.

† Four Masters.

where Neil Garv's wife Nuala lived, and, seizing her four year-old boy by the heels, beat out his brains against the door-post before the mother's eyes.* The brutality of this act was enhanced by the fact that Nuala was Hugh Roe's own sister. Unhappily the sacrifice of the innocent to the spirit of vengeance did not end there, for Neil Garv, supported by his brothers Con and Donnell, retaliated for the death of his son by making a raid on Henry Hoveden's country (between Newtown Stewart and Omagh), in the course of which five hundred cattle were captured and man, woman and child were indiscriminately killed.†

Four months later—during Neil Garv's temporary absence in Dublin—his two brothers made a similar raid upon Newtown, in the course of which twelve wood-kerne and thirty-eight "others" were killed.‡

In the meanwhile some interesting developments were taking place in Derry itself. One of the garrison, by name Lieutenant Roberts, had killed another lieutenant in a quarrel, and in order to avoid punishment, he fled to O'Dogherty, who passed him on to his dominant chieftain, Hugh Roe. Hugh Roe at once took advantage of the situation in order to try, through the medium of his prisoner, to get possession of Culmore Fort, and, incidentally, of the person of his hated rival Neil Garv. The fort was in charge of Captain Olphert, and Hugh Roe promised that, if Roberts could prevail on Olphert to hand it over to him after having invited Neil Garv to supper, he would give one thousand pounds to be divided between Roberts and Olphert, in addition to which he would give Olphert a gold chain and three hundred pounds for his men.§ Roberts pretended to acquiesce, but found means to let Docwra have all the particulars of the plot. In connection with this plot a young Irishman of the name of Hugh Boy McDavitt appears for the first time on the scene. This Hugh Boy was destined later on to play a rather prominent part in the affairs of Derry, as was also his brother Phelim Reagh. Hugh Boy is described by a contemporary as being a tall, good-looking young man, of

* Docwra to Cecil, Feb. 12th, 1601.

† Cal. State Papers, Jan. 24th, 1601.

‡ Fynes Moryson.

§ Docwra says that the bribe offered was a gold chain and £3,000 a year from the King of Spain.

extremely engaging manners, with as honest and open a countenance as a man might wish for, and with as dishonest a heart. The latter characteristic, however, was never admitted by Doewra. The Governor seems, in fact, to have been completely hypnotized by this young man, who, according to many, made a thorough fool of him. This, however, was not till later. At the time of the Culmore Fort plot this youth was sent by Hugh Roe to Olphert with a letter of introduction from Roberts. Armed with this passport, he made his way to Culmore, where he duly presented Captain Olphert with the letter of introduction, and with the gold chain (which had been given to Hugh Roe by the King of Spain, and which was valued at one hundred and sixty pounds) as an earnest of his chief's friendly intentions.* No money changed hands on the occasion of this first meeting, nor is it probable that Hugh Boy came provided with any more tangible bribe than the chain. Olphert, not to be outdone in politeness, made a pretence of agreeing to the proposition, but took good care to keep Doewra fully informed of all that was going on, in the hopes of capturing the proposed party of occupation. Hugh Roe's scheme, however, never got beyond the preliminary stages, for Hugh Boy became suspicious that Doewra knew more than was supposed, and the whole scheme was allowed to drop.† The only practical effect of the affair was that Doewra wholly broke off all friendly relations with O'Dogherty, who had proved himself too double-faced to be trusted. As a matter of fact, he was of very little value either as an ally or an enemy, for he was hopelessly incapacitated both in body and mind by ceaseless drunkenness.‡

In the winter of 1600, while the various English garrisons on the Foyle were resting till the following spring, it may be of interest to take a glance at the country in which they had settled. Derry is described as an island of high, uneven ground, a mile long and a quarter of a mile wide, containing the ruins of two churches, a Castle and a Cathedral. On one side was the sea, and on the other a bog passable on foot in summer, but not in winter. The sea was in the shape of a bow, the bog forming the string. There were good slate and

* Doewra Narration.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 207, Part VI.—77-1.

‡ Cal. State Papers, Dec. 1600.

stone quarries on the island, and two excellent springs of water. Right opposite Derry was a very large wood, and a mile higher up the river plenty of birch and hazel, but no other kinds of wood. Off the mouth of the Foyle there was good fishing for cod, and off Culmore reasonably good herring fishing. From Dunalong to Lifford excellent salmon, trout and flounder fishing from June to the end of August. Vast quantities of wild-fowl at all times. On Inishowen there was no timber of any sort, but good crops of flax, oats and barley were grown,* which were systematically improved and increased by Docwra, who instructed the natives in the newest methods of agriculture.

In January, 1601, there was great excitement in north-west Ulster over the arrival of two Spanish ships at Killibegs, bringing ten thousand ducats and two thousand muskets, with powder and lead to match. Half of this consignment went to Tyrone, while the other half was divided up between Hugh Roe, O'Rourke, O'Connor Sligo and McWilliams. Tyrone, who on former occasions had experienced certain difficulties with regard to the circulation of Spanish coinage in Ireland, resolved that there should in any case be no trouble this time, and issued a proclamation that any refusal to take the money as legal tender should be reckoned as a capital offence.†

In the same month the situation in Lough Foyle district was a good deal complicated by the death of Sir John O'Dogherty, an occurrence which at once gave rise to the usual family squabble over the succession. The rival candidates in this case were O'Dogherty's brother Phelim Oge, and his son Cahir. Hugh Roe nominated the former chief of Inishowen, while Docwra, as a natural sequence, supported the cause of the latter. At the same time, and as a necessary part of the transaction, Docwra extended a free pardon to Hugh Boy for his share in the recent attempt on Culmore Fort. This was by no means the least important development arising out of the new situation, for from this time onwards this insidious youth began to worm his way into the Governor's counsels, and to exercise an altogether unaccountable influence over his policy. In spite of the fact that he was known to be Hugh Roe's most intimate associate, and in spite of warnings from many quarters, both English and Irish, that his ultimate

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 207, Part VI.—85.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 207, Part VII.—15.

designs were treacherous, Hugh Boy was allowed to come and go as he pleased, in and out of all English garrisons on Lough Foyle, without challenge or supervision.

These garrison forts now included Derry, Culmore, Dunalong, Lifford, Greencastle, Ellaugh Castle and Rathmullen Abbey, the latter having been captured by a small force which Doewra had sent quietly at night across Lough Swilly. The total number of troops in occupation of these places was now returned at three thousand five hundred men, but, as a matter of fact, this figure was double the actual number mustered, and Doewra very nearly fell under his Queen's heavy displeasure over the discrepancy. He was ordered to explain why he had allowed the commissioners to make false returns of the musters, "whereby the Queen is much abused and her treasury fraudulently consumed." Doewra made the usual excuse to the effect that he himself had been deceived by his Captains, which may or may not have been true; but the excuse was at all events accepted in high quarters at the time, so it may reasonably be accepted by the less interested reader of the present day.

Doewra's three native allies at the moment were Neil Garv, Tirlough Luineach's son Cormac, and Hugh Boy McDavitt. MeSweeney Dogh, as we have seen, had proved false. His namesake, MeSweeney Fanad, proved little more reliable. He had started by being very friendly, but had later on deserted to Hugh Roe, whereupon Doewra had raided his country (west of Lough Swilly) and carried off a thousand cattle. This brought MeSweeney to his knees, and he came in and offered absolute submission if he might have his cattle back again. Doewra returned him the greater part of them, but kept a few by way of a fine, an arrangement with which the chief appeared quite satisfied. He left six pledges for his future good behaviour, of whom one was his son, and he and Doewra parted on the best of terms. Almost immediately afterwards, however, he openly joined Hugh Roe, and celebrated the event by raiding and carrying off a large number of the garrison cattle, whereupon Doewra—according to native custom—hanged his six pledges.* Not content with exacting this penalty—which he suspected would leave MeSweeney unmoved—Doewra invaded the country of Fanad, and burned all he

* Doewra Narration.

could find, "whereof most of his people died."* This is the most notable instance on record of Doewra having deliberately adopted fire-and-sword methods, and it must be owned that the end achieved, even if it did not justify the morality of the means employed, certainly justified their expediency, for McSweeney was so impressed by the length and power of Doewra's arm that he made a second submission, put in six fresh pledges and remained loyal to the end.

The custom of giving hostages or "pledges" as a guarantee of good faith had always been a recognized practice in Ireland, and in the sixteenth century it was universally adopted by the English in their relations with the natives. When a chief of importance gave an undertaking to follow some particular line of action, the custom was to leave a certain number of pledges, on the understanding that they should lose their lives if he failed to carry out his compact. The pledges left were generally the nearest and dearest obtainable in the circumstances, and the system seems to have worked admirably, for everyone except the pledges, whose interest in the issue was more exciting than pleasant. By no means the least remarkable feature of this custom was the apparent callousness with which the chiefs sacrificed their pledges—even when they were their own children—to any whim of the moment.

Between Doewra's new allied triumvirate, Neil Garv, Cormac and Hugh Boy, there was as bitter a hatred as there had been between the original three, Neil Garv, Art O'Neil and O'Dogherty. Not one of them would hear anything good of the other two. Doewra's own estimate of their respective merits, though prone to periodical modifications, may be summarized as follows: Hugh Boy, now officially installed as Constable of Birt Castle on Lough Swilly, he guardedly describes as "subtle, wise and civil." His wisdom he gave early proof of, for his first piece of advice to Doewra was "to carry a hard hand on such Irish as serve Her Majesty, for they care for no man that doth not so."† This elementary truth, so obvious to the Irish mind and so unintelligible to the English, must have already been brought home to Doewra by the typical case of McSweeney Fanad, who, when he was softly treated and his cattle returned to him, at once rebelled, but who, when his

* Doewra Narration; see also *Four Masters*.

† *Cal. State Papers*, Vol. 207, Part VII.—98.

pledges were hanged and his country burned, no doubt on the above-quoted advice given by Hugh Boy, became not only submissive but permanently loyal.

To Neil Garv's character Doewra devotes far more attention, analysing it in detail in quite a number of his letters to Headquarters, but always a little puzzled. The sum of his earlier conclusions (afterwards modified) was that Neil Garv was valiant in battle, but marring his valour by overmuch boasting and exaggeration. Very vain and continually taking offence at nothing. "He is prone to tyranny where he may command, and to importunate beggary where he is subject; to extreme covetousness, whether he be rich or poor, and unseasoned of any manner, discipline, knowledge or fear of God." His brothers are described as being worse than himself in every particular. Cormac is described as being of a more mild, honest and satiable disposition by far than Neil Garv.

During the winter of 1600 to 1601 Cormac, Neil Garv and his son Nachten were sent by Doewra to Dublin with the idea of stimulating their loyalty by the process of personal contact with the Queen's representative. This result may possibly have been achieved, but what is quite certain is that Neil Garv came back with an enormously inflated idea of his own importance. He reached Derry at the end of April, and at once had an interview with Doewra, which the latter records verbatim, and which is of the deepest interest as an example of the orthodox views of the Irish chiefs on the subject of their obligations towards those over whom they held sway. The interview, which was carried on partly in Neil Garv's broken English and partly through the interpretation of Captain Willis, opened with a demand by Neil Garv that he should at once be established as the O'Donnell. Doewra gives the rest of the conversation as follows :

"Why," said I, "admitting that you shall be made lord of all Tyreconnell, what is the prerogative that you would claim?"

"I will cress my people," saith he; "upon the churls I will take such things as I want and employ the inhabitants at my own discretion."

"For cutting upon the country," I answered, "it is so poor that Her Majesty was content for this year to forbear such rights as she might otherwise justly impose."

He replied: "Let the Queen do with her rights what she

will. Inishowen is mine, and were there but one cow in the country, that cow would I take and use as mine own."

"And how would you provide for the poor people to live?" said I.

"I care not," saith he; "let one thousand die, I pass not a pin, and for my people they are my subjects. I will punish, exact, cut and hang where and whenever I list."*

It is not to be supposed from the above that Neil Garv was any more brutal than his compeers. He was only enunciating doctrines which every chief in Ireland would have applauded and endorsed.

A month after his return from Dublin, Neil Garv did Doewra a signal service, for which the Governor was for ever grateful. Tyrone had given out that he was in Dungannon, but Neil Garv, from his private sources of information, learned that he was, in point of fact, in the Strabane country, and purposed making a raid on the Dunalong cattle on the 26th day of that month—*i.e.*, May. He imparted his news to Doewra, who, on the day in question, sent off Neil Garv with his Irish, and Captain Windsor with one hundred English, to lie in wait for the enterprising Earl and his marauders. Neil Garv's information proved quite correct, for presently Tyrone was seen coming along with four hundred horsemen, all happily unconscious of any ambush. At the psychological moment the Derry party, with loud yells, made their attack. The yells in themselves were enough, for Tyrone's men, without waiting for anything more substantial, made off at top speed, headed by the Earl himself. The pursuit which followed was kept up for six miles, during which "a hundred" of the raiders were killed. Tyrone himself was nearly caught more than once, his principal pursuer being Neil Garv, who kept shouting to him to turn and strike one blow if he was a gentleman.† The taunt, however, was ineffectual, and Tyrone, who—as usual—was very well mounted, got safely away. Twenty-five horses were captured, and a number of arms which the raiders had flung away in their flight.

This abortive raid was very certainly part of a larger scheme prearranged with Hugh Roe, for on the very same morning

* Doewra to Privy Council, April 23rd, 1601.

† Capt. Covert to Cecil, May 31st, 1601; see also Capt. Willis to Cecil, June 10th, 1601, and Doewra to Privy Council, June 10th, 1601.

the Donegal chief, with twelve hundred men, made a similar expedition into Inishowen ; but warning of this had also been received, and he went home with no cattle and with an appreciably smaller following than he had brought.

At the end of June Docwra captured Newtown, where he left a garrison under Captain Atkinson, and simultaneously Neil Garv captured Castle Derg. A fortnight later Omagh was also added to the list of towns wrested from Tyrone, and Art McHugh Mergoh, the minor chief in whose country the town lay, was left in charge. Encouraged by these successes, Docwra, accompanied by Neil Garv and Cormac, next set out on an exploring expedition as far as Lough Erne, with the idea of laying the foundation of a settlement at Ballyshannon. In the matter of the proposed settlement nothing very definite resulted from this journey, but Docwra succeeded in capturing twelve hundred cattle during the march, of which five hundred were brought safely back to Derry. The rest mysteriously disappeared during the march home, having—as it afterwards turned out—been surreptitiously secreted by Cormac and Neil Garv ; but, as each of these two partners in the fraud informed against the other, the bulk of the missing prey was ultimately recovered.*

Here, then, for the moment we may leave the Derry settlement. So far its success had been surprising, not so much in relation to the resources at Docwra's command, which were quite sufficient for the purpose, but by comparison with previous ventures of the same kind in other parts of Ireland. The secret of his success was simply that Docwra was a reasonably honest man. It is not suggested that he was a paragon of all the virtues. Such men did not offer themselves for the Irish service, but he was at all events free from the taint of sordid intrigue with an enemy whom he was paid to fight.

* Docwra to Privy Council, July 2nd, 1601.

CHAPTER XXX

Mountjoy and Chichester's destruction of Tyrone's corn—Docwra's reluctance to adopt the same methods—Tirlough McHenry's energy as a corn-destroyer—Mountjoy's justification of his policy.

WHILE Sir Henry Docwra was gradually reducing Tyrone's hold on the north-west, Sir Arthur Chichester was being little less energetic on the north-east side of the province. Chichester's methods differed from Docwra's in that they were frankly and avowedly brutal, whereas Docwra was only brutal when circumstances forced brutality upon him. While the latter was encouraging the Inishowen Irish to increase their tillage and improve their methods of agriculture, Chichester was deliberately working to bring about a comprehensive famine in the district under his control. The full effects of this heartless policy were not felt till a year later, and these will be dealt with in their place. In the meanwhile, however, it may be well to bear in mind that, though the odium inseparable from such drastic methods of conquest still attaches to the name of Sir Arthur Chichester, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the responsibility for them rested to a very large extent on the Lord Deputy Mountjoy. Mountjoy was undoubtedly the originator of the policy, and though Chichester adopted it with an enthusiasm which outstripped that of his superior, it was, first and last, Mountjoy's policy, and he himself set the example of putting it into practice. Fynes Moryson, his secretary, tells us that one of his first acts on arriving at the Blackwater was to cut down all the corn in the neighbourhood, and "he sent orders to Sir Henry Docwra and Sir Arthur Chichester to do the same." Docwra at no time showed any disposition to interpret his orders literally, and, in fact, never made any real effort to carry them out, except when he was dealing with O'Cahan's country on the east of the Foyle, which

was, in fact, part of Tyrone's country. To the west of the Foyle—if we except the isolated case of Fanad—tillage and husbandry were persistently encouraged, and in 1604, when famine was devastating Antrim and Down, Docwra had the gratification of being able to report that Inishowen was “abounding in houses, corn, cattle and people.”* Mountjoy justified his methods with perfect candour, and evidently without consciousness that there was anything exceptionally barbarous in what he was doing; and it is to be doubted whether any of his contemporaries, English or Irish, would have condemned his methods as being in any way out of the common. Tirlough McHenry, who was with Mountjoy in the character of an ally, was, we are told, the foremost of any in cutting down his half-brother's corn.†

Such of the English officials as thought it necessary to frame a justification for the policy of fire and sword did so on the ground that there was no other way. “If the rebels are received to peace,” Sir Oliver Lambert wrote to Cecil, “without killing, burning and wasting, then Her Majesty may expect a fresh war every year.”‡ Fire and sword were, in fact, the unpleasant necessities which were forced on the executive in dealing with a people who invariably misunderstood elenecy, and abused it. Mountjoy's own explanation of his strong-hand policy was rather on the ground of general expediency. “Without corn,” he wrote to the English Privy Council, “they have no other means to keep their bonaghts, which are their hired soldiers; and this course, since our last despatch, we have so earnestly applied as that we have destroyed an incredible amount of corn. . . . If our means will serve to keep us together till their harvest be past, we make no doubt but we shall utterly break and undo them, for though they have that abundance of corn that it is impossible for us to cut it all, yet, being hereabouts, we shall give opportunity to the garrison to gather in a good part, which will stand them in great stead. . . . The corn which we have destroyed, besides feeding their bonaghts, would have fed many Spaniards, had they come.”

The responsibility for the corn-destroying policy, which ultimately produced the famine of 1603, may have rested, and,

* Docwra Narration.

† Mountjoy to Cecil, Aug. 7th, 1601.

‡ Lambert to Cecil, March 7th, 1602.

indeed, by the evidence of his own letter actually did rest, with Mountjoy ; but, none the less, Chichester still stands out as by far the most ruthless of the three English commanders who were gradually bringing about the subjugation of the rebel Earl.

CHAPTER XXXI

Local affairs in Antrim—Shane McBrian and Neil McHugh—Their unreliability—Chichester's final allocation of lands to the native chiefs in Antrim—Con McNeil—He attacks the Belfast garrison—His imprisonment in Carrickfergus—Hugh Montgomery—James Hamilton—Con parts with his estates in return for liberty—Origin of the Scottish settlement in Ulster—Sir Edward Cromwell's purchases of land in County Down—Death of James McSorley—Suspicion of poison—Randall McSorley succeeds—His capture of Sir James McDonnell—Cause of the rupture between Randall and Sir James—The latter is imprisoned in Dunluce.

THE parochial doings of the petty Ulster chiefs, their internecine feuds, their rebellions, repentances, absolutions and lapses are mainly—and, indeed, perhaps solely—interesting as milestones or finger-posts leading up by gradual stages to the situation at the present day. From this point of view, there is a live interest, and, indeed, an actual importance, in following the kaleidoscopic movements which gradually settled down into the configuration identified with the modern counties of Down and Antrim. We last left the two rival chiefs of North Clondeboy, Shane McBrian and Neil McHugh, as companions in Carrickfergus Castle, both having been there imprisoned as the penalty for their betrayal of their respective trusts of Belfast and Edenduffcarrick. These lapses from good behaviour had occurred just prior to Sir John Chichester's arrival as Governor, and that energetic warrior had quickly recaptured both these important strongholds, and had taken the two delinquents up to Dublin with him, where Loftus and Wallop—who were at this time administering the Government during the absence of Lord Burgh—had pronounced on both the cousins the very mild penalty of temporary incarceration in Carrickfergus. In January, 1598, Neil McHugh had managed to effect his escape,* and very shortly afterwards made an abortive attempt to capture

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 202-22.

Edenduffcarrick. For this act there was some justification in the piratical conduct of the English garrison, who, under an unprincipled commander, had robbed and spoiled the neighbouring peasants. Chichester, recognizing that the provocation offered had been very great, not only overlooked Neil's offence, but went to the length of removing the offending commander, and of once more reinstating Neil McHugh as Constable of Edenduffcarrick. For two years Neil appears to have behaved reasonably well; but in December, 1600, moved no doubt by the knowledge of the approaching Spanish invasion, he once more betrayed the Castle, together with all Chichester's fleet of boats, into the hands of Tyrone.* This second act of treachery proved too much for the patience of Sir Arthur Chichester, who had by this time taken his younger brother's place. He quickly recaptured the lost Castle, but he for ever lost all faith in the reliability of Neil McHugh.

Shane had remained all this time a prisoner, but finally—sickened by Neil McHugh's repeated acts of treachery—Chichester went up with Shane to Dublin, with a view to recommending his pardon, and to re-establishing him as the chief of North Clondeboyne in place of his untrustworthy cousin. In advocating this step he was frankly advocating the lesser of two evils. He well knew that both the cousins were quite undependable. "They are so false and hollow-hearted," he wrote to Cecil, shortly after his return from Dublin, "that there is little trust or dependency upon their oaths, pledges or promises."† Each of the two habitually accused the other of every species of infamy, and, when put to the test himself, proved worthy of his own description. Shane's record, however, was, on the whole, less objectionable than that of his cousin, and, on Chichester's recommendation, this son of Brian McPhelim was once more given a trial. It is to be assumed that, with the advance of years, Shane's treasonable activities had become to a certain extent impaired, for the experiment would seem to have been quite successful; and, in the final redistribution of 1605, we find Shane, still evidently the exemplary subject, allotted ten thousand acres in the southern part of North Clondeboyne, while the children of the less exemplary Neil had to be content with four thousand acres

* Chichester to Cecil, April 12th, 1601. † *Ibid.*

further north, and Rory McQuillin with two thousand acres beyond again.* The Route and the Glynns were, at the same time, officially vested in Randall McSorley, by that time known as Sir Randall McDonnell, who had managed, by posing as a compatriot, to extract from James I. a grant of the entire coast-line from Larne to the Bann.

We can now turn for a moment to South Clandeboye. Here, it will be remembered, that on the death of Con McNeil Oge, the tentatively loyal Neil McBrian Feartagh had been established as chief. He was a weak but harmless man, who changed sides with each ebb and flow of the tide of war, but who, even when nominally hostile, was guiltless of any enormities. When this man died in February, 1601, Chichester, without hesitation, established his son Con McNeil in his father's place, in preference to a rival candidate in the person of one Owen McHugh. Con did not repay Chichester's confidence in the way that was hoped, for on the arrival of the Spaniards at Kinsale in September of the same year, he—in common with almost every chief in Ireland—jumped to the conclusion that the millennium had arrived, and, in order to be an early participator in its loaves and fishes, went over bodily to Tyrone. In place, however, of the expected millennium came the news of Tyrone's complete overthrow, and Con, to his painful surprise, found himself on the losing side.† He was imprisoned in Carrickfergus, and Shane McBrian, who certainly had it to his credit that he had not joined Tyrone on the invasion of the Spaniards (he having been in prison at the time), was given temporary sway over South Clandeboye in addition to his own proportion of North Clandeboye.

Con was soon pardoned on account of his youth and inexperience, and reinstated in Castlereagh, which was the principal fortress of South Clandeboye. Here he behaved himself with decency and decorum for a year, but in 1603 he was guilty of a lapse the consequences of which were so momentous as to entirely revolutionize the history of Ulster.

The facts of the case are as follows: Con was indulging in a pleasant carouse at Castlereagh. So successful and so pro-

* Cal. State Papers (James), 538.

† Chichester to Cecil, Sept. 8th, 1601.

tracted was the entertainment, that he ran out of wine, and sent some men of his to Belfast to fetch more. The men returned very drunk indeed, but without the wine, and with a story that the English soldiers had fallen upon them and taken it from them by force. The thirsty Con, furious at his disappointment, threatened his men with the most gruesome penalties if they did not at once return and avenge this insult on the persons of the English soldiers. He himself led them back till within striking distance, when he prudently withdrew to a convenient hill from which he could watch operations. The men, who were still very drunk, made an effort to do as directed, but were easily beaten off, and some of them were killed.* For this unprovoked act of aggression (for Con's men had of course drunk the wine themselves and invented the story of its seizure by the English), Con was imprisoned in Carrickfergus, but was allowed full liberty to walk about the town accompanied by a single sentry as guard.

A certain Scotsman, named Sir Hugh Montgomery, had a small barque with which he used to trade backwards and forwards between Carrickfergus and Scotland, and he now came forward with an offer to set Con at liberty if the latter would make over to him half his lands. Con joyfully accepted the condition, provided Sir Hugh made pretence of carrying him off by force. This was agreed to, and the comedy was duly carried out as planned. Con and his pretended captor got safely away to Scotland, and from there made their way to London, where the King ratified the transaction. Before it was finally carried through, however, one James Hamilton, for reasons which are very far from clear, became a partner in the deal, with the result that Con had to be content with one-third of his lands instead of the half originally agreed. To this rather questionable modification of the agreement Con seems to have raised no objection, being apparently quite satisfied to find himself a free man and the possessor of twenty-two thousand acres. Unfortunately, however, he had not the strength of mind to retain possession of these, but, bribed by the lure of ready money, disposed of them later on to Hamilton and Montgomery.† This arrangement was not as unfavourable to Con as might

* Hamilton MSS.

† In return for a cash payment of £60 and an annual rent of £160.

appear, for the lands at the time were desolate and denuded of population ; but it constituted a distinct hardship on his son Daniel, who, on the death of his father, found himself landless and penniless. The hardship of Daniel's case, however, was duly recognized by Charles I., and he received special consideration from the Government.

While Hamilton and Montgomery were carrying through the above-described deal, Sir Edward Cromwell, in County Down, had bought from McCartan part of his country, and later on acquired a considerable tract of land in Lecale. All these purchases of land were facilitated by the desolation and unproductiveness of these portions of Down and Antrim consequent upon Chichester's famine. King James's ratification of the transfers contained the proviso that the purchased lands were to be exclusively peopled with English or inland Scots, and in this way was laid the foundation-stone of the great Ulster Plantation.

By the time the Government was ready to deal with the question of the six counties forfeited on account of Tyrone's rebellion, a colony of Anglo-Saxon families had spread over the greater part of Ulster's two north-eastern counties. The coast-line between Glenarm and the Bann, and the lands behind known as the Route and the Glynns, were unaffected by these changes, and still remained in the hands of the Highland Scotch.

Local disturbances in these districts had been occasioned by the death of James McSorley at Dunluce Castle in April, 1601. The conditions surrounding his death were so peculiar as to give rise to the rumour that he had been poisoned by his surgeon, William Linn, bribed to the act by an emissary of Chichester. The evidence in support of this story is, however, anonymous and not very convincing. Sir James's first wife had been a daughter of old Phelim Bacagh, but he had later on married a nine-year-old daughter of Tyrone.* He left nine sons, but none of these benefited in any way by his death, for his brother Randall, by virtue of the tanistry custom, at once stepped into his position, and took command of the armed forces of the Route. Randall's first venture as commander-in-chief was singularly fortunate. He intercepted Sir James McDonnell

* Cal. State Papers, Vol. 201-67-2 and 201-70.

(Angus's eldest son), who, in company with Henry O'Hagan and eighty of Tyrone's horsemen, was returning from a consultation with the Earl. The surprised party, which was presumably outnumbered, took to its heels, but not before Sir James had been taken prisoner. It was reported at the time that Henry O'Hagan (the eldest son of Art Bradagh O'Hagan) had been killed during the encounter, but this turned out to be untrue.

The explanation of the above affair is as follows : Old Angus now lived entirely in Cantyre. He was generally drunk, and had lost all interest in the lands which he had once owned in Ulster. His eldest son James, wearying of his father's inconvenient longevity, made an unfilial attempt to make away with him ; but, being foiled in this, had to flee for his life to Ireland, where he at once started intriguing with Tyrone with a view to the restitution of his lands in the Glynns, which Randall had usurped.

A convenient lever with which to bring pressure to bear on Tyrone had been placed in Sir James's hands by Elizabeth's recent change of attitude in the matter of Scotch mercenary troops. After many years of hesitation, she had at last so far made up her mind to the use of these at Lough Foyle as to start serious negotiations on the subject with one Achinross, resident in Cantyre.* Achinross was merely an agent or intermediary, and the only sources on which he could draw for his supplies of men were the Campbells, Macleans, or McDonnells. Of these, the McDonnells were the strongest, and it was with these that he actually started negotiations. Old Angus was still loyal to the Queen, and willing to help her to the utmost limits of his powers, but those powers had to a great extent passed out of his hands, and negotiations—as in the time of Essex—had mainly to be conducted through the medium of his sons. Of these, James was already in Ulster, and, taking advantage of the situation, he lost no time in approaching Tyrone with a view to putting forward a counter-offer, which was, in effect, that the Scotch army chartered for the Queen by Achinross should be at Tyrone's disposal in return for his guarantee that the Glynns would be restored to the line of Angus. The Earl, it need scarcely be said, was deeply interested, and James was,

* Privy Council to Docwra, Nov. 5th, 1600.

as a matter of fact, on his return under escort from an interview with Tyrone on this very subject, when Randall, who had got news of his intentions, managed to turn the tables, as above described, by capturing his cousin. Tyrone's men scurried back to their master, and Sir James went as a prisoner to Dunluce Castle.

CHAPTER XXXII

Chichester builds a fleet of boats for Lough Neagh—His massacre of Patrick O'Quin's family—Mountjoy visits Carrickfergus—His military tour of Down—His moderation—Submission of Arthur Magennis and Patrick McArt Moyle—Mountjoy reaches the Blackwater—Tyrone's army prepares to bar his way—Mountjoy's determined advance—His astonishment at the precipitate flight of the Irish—Skirmish at Benburb—Arrival of the Spanish Fleet at Kinsale.

SIR ARTHUR CHICHESTER was a man of untiring energy and of feverish zeal in the service of his Queen. During the winter of 1600 he built a boat of thirty tons, another of fourteen tons, two of ten tons each, and a number of smaller craft, all of which were launched on Lough Neagh and ready for use by the spring of 1601.* These were the boats which Neil McHugh afterwards delivered into Tyrone's hands when he betrayed the Castle of Edenduffcarrick. Tyrone's desire to get possession of the fleet is easily understood, for its presence on the waters of Lough Neagh opened up his country to attack from all sorts of unexpected quarters.

The baptism of Chichester's new fleet was a bloody ceremony. In May he transported a force across to the western shore of Lough Neagh, with the idea of making it quite clear to the rebel Earl that the day was passed when his territory was only vulnerable by way of the Blackwater fort, which at the moment was in the hands of the enemy. Chichester carried out his enterprise with his customary thoroughness and brutality. His selected victim was one Patrick O'Quin, who lived four miles only from Dungannon, and who, in order to furnish an illustration of the length of Chichester's arm, was wiped off the face of the earth, together with his family and all his belongings.†

Chichester had hardly returned from this bloody raid before

* Cal. State Papers, May 31st, 1602.

† Chichester to Cecil, May 15th, 1601.

he received a visit from the Deputy. Mountjoy had by now assured the lines of communication between Dundalk and Newry by adopting the obvious precaution of building a fort in the Moyerie Pass at the Three Mile Water. Sir Samuel Bagenal was brought down from Newry and put in charge of this new fort (a distinct degradation), while Sir Francis Stafford was promoted to the governorship of Newry. Having by this admirable stroke eliminated the chief obstacle to the invasion of the north, the Deputy then passed on to Newry, and from there struck off to the east through Magennis's country (Iveagh) to Lecale. The object of this last move was to bring the recalcitrant Arthur Magennis to his senses. With this end in view, all Magennis's Castles were taken out of his hands and garrisoned with English troops. Magennis's rule was declared at an end, and Sir Richard Moryson was established as Governor of Iveagh and Lecale with his headquarters at Down.*

It was the time-honoured practice of the native Irish to visit the sins of the chief on the heads of the people over whom he ruled, the basic idea at the back of the practice being that, as the chief's people were the sources from which he drew his revenue, it was a financial annoyance to the chief to have them killed. In pursuance of this principle, we have seen Farney and Magee Island raided, and the peasants killed—by Tyrone in the one case and by James McSorley in the other—with the sole idea of injuring the Earl of Essex, who was the English grantee. Later on again, we find Tyrone on two occasions burning, killing and spoiling the O'Carrolls' and Sir Theobald Dillon's tenants in Westmeath for no other reason than that their landlord had refused to join him.† Had he been guided by native precedents, Mountjoy would have been fully justified in exacting a bloody retribution from the peasants of Iveagh and Kilwarlin for the defection of their lords. He did not. As far as can be judged from the contemporary records there was no bloodshed during this tour, or, at any rate, no bloodshed of non-combatants.

In June Mountjoy passed on from Lecale, through McCartan's

* Fynes Moryson.

† Chichester writing to the Privy Council on Sept. 8th, 1607, with regard to this practice says: "These people being apt to think that the offences of their lords are punishable on them, how innocent soever, are apt to run into disorder, and to remove their fears they have Commissioners to assure them of His Majesty's gracious disposition towards them."

country, to Carriekfergus, where he met Chichester, who had just returned from an expedition which could certainly not be called bloodless (the butchery of the O'Quins). It would be interesting to know whether the two had any argument as to the relative merits of their respective methods.

The reason for Mountjoy's visit to Carriekfergus was that he had originally planned to work round along the coast from that point to Lough Foyle, keeping in touch with a victualling fleet which was to have arrived from England. The fleet, however—as was not uncommon in such cases—did not come, and Mountjoy, being short of provisions, was obliged to disband the bulk of his small force of twelve hundred men into the most convenient garrisons in the neighbourhood, including those recently established in Magennis's country. Mountjoy himself, with a remarkable disregard of personal danger, returned to Dundalk with only three companies in attendance.

Mountjoy's expedition through County Down, bloodless though it had been, was not without its effect, for he had no sooner got back to Dundalk than Arthur Magennis and Patrick McArt Moyle (the betrayer of Monaghan) presented themselves before him and tendered their humble submission. Each was fined three hundred cows (for the use of the troops, and not—as in old days—for the Deputy's own pocket), and so were sent away absolved. Having by these very opportune fines replenished his commissariat, Mountjoy, on July 11th, once more started for the north with an army of sixteen hundred men, and on the 13th reached Mount Norris. Here he stayed one night with Captain Blaney, and on the following morning set out for the Blackwater. This fort, as already recounted, had been lost to the English after Bagenal's defeat at the Yellow Ford. Captain Blaney had retaken it with the Mount Norris garrison about four months before the Deputy's visit, but he had been unable to garrison it, and it had once again fallen into Tyrone's hands. The river Blackwater being, so to speak, Tyrone's park fence, and the country beyond it the forbidden ground on which no English were to tread, every conceivable device had been adopted by which Mountjoy's passage of the ford could be barred.

The Lord Deputy took up his position on the south side of the river, and Tyrone with all his forces did the like on the north side, with a derisive display of the banners, drums and

trumpets taken in the Yellow Ford battle. A defiant volley or two was also fired at the Deputy's force, but the distance was too great for any effect. Mountjoy had brought with him a rabinet and a falcon, and—not to be outdone in noise—he now fired one round from the latter across the river, upon which Tyrone's entire army vanished as if by magic and was seen no more that day. There were no casualties on either side, but, no doubt in deference to the noise or the intention, the Four Masters describe the day's proceedings as “a fierce and furious battle.”

On the following day Mountjoy went down to the ford, on the far side of which Tyrone had posted his army in a most elaborate system of trenches. Mountjoy, encouraged by the success of his experiment of the day before, gave them one shot from the rabinet, but this time with no effect, the defenders realizing no doubt that they were safer from this form of attack in their trenches than in the open behind. Mountjoy then ordered Captain Williams to attempt the ford at the old fort, while Sir Henry Danvers and Sir Henry Folliott simultaneously attacked the fords above and below. This determined advance proved too severe a trial for the fortitude of Tyrone's army, and they did not await further developments. “The Irish fired some volleys of shot out of their spyke-holes,” Fenton wrote to Cecil, “but when they saw the companies resolved to enter the water, they quit their trenches and ran to the woods.”* Mountjoy was no less elated than surprised at this unexpectedly easy victory, for the position offered every opportunity for a fierce and stubborn defence, which might have cost his army dear. “Upon view of the trenches made upon every ford,” Fynes Moryson, who was present on the occasion, writes, “his lordship found them so strongly and artificially fortified, wondering much that they should either so laboriously fortify them if they meant not to defend them, or should so cowardly quit such strong places and so suddenly, if they had former resolution to make them good.”†

On July 16th Mountjoy took with him Sir Christopher St. Lawrence's regiment of Irish, and went up the river to Benburb. Tyrone appeared in strength, but at a prudent distance. Gradually all Mountjoy's forces came up, and the whole day was occupied in long-range skirmishes with the enemy, during

* Fenton to Cecil, July, 1601. † Fynes Moryson.

which Captain Williams's leg was broken by a bullet, and the Government force in all had twenty-five killed and seventy wounded. We have no figures as to the Irish losses, which were probably insignificant, as they had the advantage of cover from the woods. The Bishop of Meath, however, was more optimistic, and in a letter to Sir George Carey he remarked with bloodthirsty piety, that "the loss to the rebels is thought to be great—God's name be blessed!"

That gallant soldier, Captain Williams, after having had his leg set by the army surgeon, was once more left in command of the Blackwater fort, and the Deputy returned to Dundalk. Nothing, however, was further from his thoughts than to remain inactive and leave the work to others. He spent the whole of August in riding backwards and forwards between Dundalk and the Blackwater, so as to keep in touch with the reconstruction work, and to see to the strengthening of his lines of communication. In this month he once more renewed the proclamation offering a reward for the Earl of Tyrone dead or alive, but for some curious and unexplained reason the prize-money was now reduced by half, two thousand marks being offered for the rebel chief alive and one thousand dead. The offer produced no better response than before, and before Mountjoy had time to judge of its effect the entire situation in Ireland was changed by the sudden materialization of the long-expected Spanish invasion in the south. Early in September forty-three galleons sailed proudly into Kinsale harbour, and there landed some 4,500 men, who took possession of the promontory to the east of the town. Leaving Ulster for the time to look after itself, Mountjoy, with all the available forces he could raise, hurried down to Munster to meet this new danger. On September 27th he reached Cork, where he spent three weeks in collecting and organizing his force, and on October 16th continued his march to Kinsale at the head of 4,300 men.*

* Fynes Moryson.

CHAPTER XXXIII

Excitement in Ireland consequent upon the arrival of the Spaniards—General belief in the overthrow of the English—Defection of the friendly chiefs—Tirlough McGilson—His treacherous seizure of Newtown—Docwra's intense surprise—Art McHugh Mergoh at Castle Derg—Hugh Boy appointed arbitrator in the Inishowen case—He nominates himself supreme chief—Deadly enmity between Neil Garv and Hugh Roe—The case of Donegal Castle—Explosion in the magazine—Neil Garv's supposed complicity—Docwra's belief in his innocence—Relief of Donegal Castle by Docwra.

THE excitement aroused in Ulster by the coming of the Spaniards was intense. Every sort of wild speculative rumour was afloat as to the magical benefits which would be showered upon the country as the result of this influx of England's enemies. These rumours were none the less exciting in that they were wholly nebulous and vague, as, indeed, from their very nature they were bound to be. Altogether apart from speculative rumours, however, the known facts were in themselves quite sufficient to fill the Irish with a reasonable hope that the ball of victory now at length lay at their feet. A dispassionate review of the circumstances cannot but lead to the admission that such hopes were in substance justified. For ten years past Tyrone's rebellion had defied suppression. During the latter part of this period it had been freely given out, among the inner circles of the Irish, that the Earl was merely playing with the English authorities by temporary submissions, pretences of loyalty, etc., until such time as the arrival of the Spaniards should make him strong enough to throw off the mask, and to annihilate the dupes with whom he had been temporizing. That moment, in the public opinion, had now come. If Tyrone, unaided, could hold the English forces for ten years, it seemed a foregone conclusion that, with the invincible Spaniards at his side, he could sweep all before him. The only factor in the case which was lost sight of, and which, indeed, was not within the knowledge of many, was that a

genuine man had now at last taken the place of the succession of shuffling intriguers who for five-and-twenty years had governed Ireland. The most noticeable outcome of the sudden change in the situation was the promptitude with which the native Irish adherents of the Government went over to the winning side, or to what they had little doubt at the time was going to prove the winning side. The first to go over was Tirlough McHenry, who a month earlier had been such an enthusiastic destroyer of the rebels' corn that it was said he resented any man's efforts to cut more than he did himself. His example was at once followed by Tirlough Luineach's son Cormac, to the intense mortification of Sir Henry Docwra. Cormac had always been Docwra's favourite Irish ally, and his disaffection went far to shake the Governor's belief in the reliability of the native element. His faith, however, was shortly to receive a ruder shock still. When Cormac went over to Tyrone, his company of Irish was given by Docwra to one Tirlough McGilson. Docwra's confidence in this man was very firmly established. In August, 1601, shortly before the above-mentioned appointment, Docwra informed the English Privy Council that "Tirlough McGilson, of all the Irish without exception in the nature of a wasting kern, hath absolutely done the best service and discovered most of his countrymen's lewdness." Nor was Docwra the only man who liked and believed in the friendly McGilson. Captain Atkinson, the Constable of Newtown, thoroughly approved of Docwra's selection, and at once wrote asking that McGilson might be sent to help him at Newtown, as he was not only a personal friend of his own, but a man who knew all the country round by heart, and who would therefore be of the greatest assistance both as guide and as an adviser.

Accordingly McGilson and his new company of Irish were transferred to Newtown, but with results very different from those anticipated by either Docwra or Atkinson; for, after a few days of friendly intercourse, the harmony of the mixed garrison was disturbed in the following startling manner. McGilson enticed the unsuspecting Atkinson down to the banks of the Mourne on some plausible pretext, and there suddenly caused him to be seized and bound by a number of his men who were concealed there for the purpose, while the remainder

of the Irish garrison fell upon their unsuspecting English comrades and murdered every man of them in cold blood.*

Doewra's distress and astonishment at this unexpected development was very great. "The man was so well known," he wrote, "and trusted and beloved of all men. He had served among us since Art O'Neil first came in, and has to my knowledge delivered up at least twenty spies to be hanged, and has killed with his own hand not so few as two hundred people of his own nation. He lived intimately with Atkinson, and had received so many gifts from him that I think no man would have believed his being a traitor; but my own conclusion is that, out of the mere disposition of a perfidious nature, delighting in the very qualities of evil, he was moved thereunto by a sudden and mere instigation of the devil, and so doth himself confess, making offer to redeem his offence by a like murder upon the contrary side, so he may withal be well rewarded for his labour."†

Doewra's astonishment at McGilson's lapse is understandable, but to us the explanation of his conduct is simple enough. He had heard of the arrival of the Spaniards in Munster (which Doewra at the time of his writing had not), and hoped to win favour with Tyrone by putting Newtown into his hands. His opportunism was, however, as it turned out, miscalculated.

Further evidence of the sudden insanity which had fallen upon the Province was furnished by the case of Castle Derg, which, in many respects, was very similar to that of Newtown—so similar, in fact, as to make it tolerably clear that both incidents were part of the same plot. These are the facts with regard to Castle Derg. On the morning following the seizure of Newtown, Art McHugh Mergoh, whom Doewra had appointed Constable of Omagh, rode up to Castle Derg, and asked for an interview with Captain Dutton, who was in charge. Dutton, who had heard nothing of the Newtown disaster, came out without hesitation, and walked down with Art McHugh to the banks of the Derg, where he was seized and bound in very much the same way that Captain Atkinson had been seized and bound. Here, however, the exact parallel ceased, for there were no Irish within the walls of Castle Derg to put the finishing touches to the transaction. Art McHugh was therefore

* Doewra Narration.

† Doewra to Privy Council of England, Sept. 28th, 1601.

forced to less direct methods in order to get the Castle into his hands. He informed the Lieutenant, on whom the command had devolved, that he would at once hang his Captain unless the Castle were given up to him. The threat, however, failed to move the Lieutenant, who possibly agreed with Docwra that Dutton richly deserved hanging for being such a fool as to be taken in, after the repeated warnings he had received.* Art McHugh did not in the end carry out his threat, and Dutton was eventually restored to Docwra, in whose estimation, however, he never regained his lost place.

This succession of disappointments seriously shook Docwra's belief in his judgment of character, and he began to have doubts even of Hugh Boy. That young gentleman, however, had rendered very material service to the Governor by an act for which Docwra could not be otherwise than grateful. He had warned the Derry Governor, earlier in the year, that a Spanish force would most certainly land in Munster before Christmas. Docwra had passed the information on to Mountjoy, who was wise enough to take it as a serious warning, which indeed it had proved. Docwra's gratitude took a practical shape. He appointed Hugh Boy sole commissioner to arbitrate on the dispute between Phelim and Cahir O'Dogherty as to the succession to the chiefry of Inishowen. Hugh Boy, feeling doubtless some reluctance to favour one of the claimants at the expense of the other, settled the matter by dispossessing both the O'Doghertys, and nominating himself chief of Inishowen. Such was Docwra's infatuation at the time that he actually endorsed this outrageous act of piracy, and established the usurper in the Castle of Birt.

The chief of Inishowen was, of necessity, the caterer for the wants of the Derry garrison, and it is quite clear that a desire to hold this office was at the back of Hugh Boy's high-handed proceeding; for he at once started exacting the most exorbitant prices for the country produce, his greed in this respect even surpassing that of his predecessor, Sir John O'Dogherty. This unreasonable rapacity not unnaturally disgusted Docwra, and when—as above narrated—three of his other selected favourites had in quick succession proved false, he lost all faith in human nature, and, for fear of worse, removed Hugh Boy from his self-appointed post and re-established Cahir

* Docwra Narration,

O'Dogherty in his inheritance. Hugh Boy seems to have accepted the rebuff with a good grace, and remained at any rate nominally loyal to the end, for he was still in Doewra's service when he was killed.

Neil Garv, who had been the most suspected, and certainly the most disliked of all Doewra's original Irish allies, was now the only one left him. His loyalty had so far been fairly well assured, for he had been playing a game in which the assistance of the Governor was a necessary factor to the realization of his schemes. His loyalty was still further assured by the deadly enmity existing between him and Hugh Roe. For this enmity there were several most cogent reasons. First and foremost, Neil Garv was trying to usurp the position of the O'Donnell; he had killed Hugh Roe's brother; Hugh Roe had killed his infant son; Hugh Roe had offered a big reward for his head, and had, moreover, as we have seen, attempted to bribe Captain Olphert to hand over Neil Garv at the same time as the fort of Culmore, in which case there is little doubt that Neil Garv's head would have speedily parted from his body. In such circumstances it is hardly conceivable that the two men should have been in amicable conspiracy against the English.

Allegations to this effect were freely circulated, but Doewra was always sceptical, and nothing, as a matter of fact, was ever proved even in connection with the Donegal Castle explosion, as to which the ill-natured hinted that Neil Garv was privy. The facts of this case are as follows: On August 2nd, 1601, Neil Garv and his brother Con, together with Captains Rande, Orrel and Gore, and five hundred men, were sent to occupy Donegal Castle and the Abbey attached to it. Nothing of striking interest occurred for the first two months, but at the beginning of October the garrison was besieged by no less a person than Hugh Roe himself, backed up by all the forces he could muster. It is more than probable that, in making this attempt upon the Castle, Hugh Roe's main objective was the person of Neil Garv, whose destruction was of far more importance to him than the destruction of the English garrison. The siege, however, which was in the nature of a blockade, made no impression upon those within the walls beyond reducing their food supplies to a very low ebb. On Michaelmas Day, as a result either of mischance or of treachery, a fire broke out in the Abbey, which was being utilized as the powder

magazine. A tremendous explosion followed, which was so immediately succeeded by an attack from the Irish as to suggest that the occurrence had not been altogether unexpected; in fact, the Four Masters' version of the incident practically admits that the explosion was expected. The attack was beaten off, but Captain Rande, a sergeant and twenty-six men were killed by the explosion, and Neil Garv's brother Con was so badly injured by the falling of a wall that he subsequently died.* The Store House, Provost House and Castle remained intact, but all the powder was lost, together with two hundred pounds in money and a large quantity of provisions. Outside of these minor calamities the explosion had little practical effect on the progress of the siege. That it was the work of someone within the walls is beyond doubt, but that Neil Garv had any hand in it is improbable in the extreme. Doewra's report of the affair was to the effect that Neil Garv had behaved very well, both before and after the explosion. In any case, the salient fact stands out that, in spite of the great straits to which the garrison was subsequently put for food, the place was successfully held by Neil Garv till Hugh Roe was forced to march south at the beginning of November to join the Spaniards at Kinsale. Doewra then himself relieved the garrison from their unpleasant position, and it was on his return march from this expedition that he devastated McSweeney Fanad's country in the manner already described.

* Doewra Narration; see also Four Masters.

CHAPTER XXXIV

Tyrone's failure to co-operate with the Spaniards—His many excuses to avoid the decisive battle—Numerical superiority of Tyrone's army—Its admirable equipment—Disgust of the Spaniards at Tyrone's procrastination—Tyrone devastates Louth and Meath—He returns to Dungannon—He eventually marches south—He reaches Kinsale on December 21st—Arrangements for attack—Betrayal of the scheme by Brian McHugh Oge—Battle of Kinsale—Rout of the Irish—Indignation of the Spaniards.

EAGERLY anticipated events are very apt to fall short of expectation, and even to arrive in strange and unlooked-for garbs. For years past the Irish had been fed on the doctrine that the coming of the Spaniards was the only constituent lacking from the synthesis of happy events which was to bring about the millennium in Ireland. Tyrone himself had for ten years placarded this advertisement over all the blank walls of Ulster. The good things to which it prophetically pointed were in equal parts material and spiritual. The "pagan beasts," as he labels the English in a letter to McCarthy More,* were to be consumed by fire and sword, and riches and honour to all were to follow the re-establishment of the true faith. Nor was this all. He had excused the timidity and hesitation, which had been so conspicuous in his leadership, on the ground that the moment was not ripe, the fateful hour had not yet struck, and that to anticipate it rashly would ruin all. In the meanwhile, he reasoned that the policy dictated by prudence was to temporize as long as possible, while perfecting his organization, and drilling and equipping the native troops, to the use of which he had now been forced. There is not the slightest doubt that in this policy he was right. Tyrone had all the qualities of a born diplomatist. In that direction lay his genius, and it was only when it came to actual fighting in the field that his fundamental cowardice paralysed him, and prevented him from carrying his own admirable pro-

* Tyrone to McCarthy More, Jan. 27th, 1601.

gramme to a successful issue. Like many others of his type, both before and since, he mistook massacre for fighting and pillage for the sign of victory. Never was this more painfully apparent than during the autumn of 1601.

The Spaniards had come in response to earnest and persistent prayers from the Irish leaders. They had been told that on their arrival they would be at once joined by a powerful Irish army perfectly trained and equipped. The Irish army was by arrangement to bring with it four hundred chargers, for which the Spaniards were to—and actually did—come provided with four hundred saddles. There was no reason why any of these preconcerted arrangements should have missed fire, for the date and place of the Spanish landing had been known—with some degree of accuracy—for many weeks before the actual event. In every single respect, however, the Irish fell short of their undertaking.

Undoubtedly Tyrone's most criminal failure was in neglecting to join up with the Spaniards the moment the news of their arrival reached him. At that time Mountjoy's forces, and those of the newly-arrived Spaniards were about equal. Two thousand more Spaniards were known to be following close on the heels of the first detachment, and Tyrone himself had seven thousand men whom he could put in the field within a few hours. Nor were these a mere rabble of wood-kerne; they were a thoroughly well-trained and well-equipped force. Sir Ralph Lane reckoned them to be no whit behind the English troops in the matter of training and equipment. "But now," he wrote to Essex as early as 1596, "the Irish soldiers are most ready, well disciplined, and as good marksmen as Spain, France or Flanders can show. All this owing to the Earl of Tyrone, who, as he has done for three years past, infinitely belabours them with training in all parts of Ulster."* The five years which had elapsed since the writing of Lane's letter had still further added to the training, discipline and equipment of Tyrone's Irish army, which, by the end of 1601, was certainly equal in all three respects to the other two armies at the moment in Ireland. By the beginning of October, then, the combined Spanish and Irish forces could have put 13,500 well-trained and equipped men into the field against Mountjoy's 4,300, a superiority in numbers which could hardly have failed to have

* Sir Ralph Lane to Essex, Oct. 23rd, 1596.

assured victory. In spite of this, Tyrone hesitated. Much valuable time was, in the first instance, wasted in debating whether he himself should go south or remain in Ulster. Finally it was decided that he should go. With a fine display of theatrical emotion, the O'Neil nominated his eldest son Hughanist, at the same time expressing the pious hope that he himself would find a higher rank in Heaven before the end of the campaign. Noble and patriotic as this aspiration was, its author was strangely slow, when the occasion came, to offer any opportunity for its fulfilment. The idea of a pitched battle seems to have been so inherently distasteful to him that he was ready to grasp at any trivial excuse for postponing the ordeal by combat, which he knew awaited him in the south.

The Spaniards, on their side, were not unnaturally at a loss to account for the non-appearance of a man who for years had been clamouring for their interference. Urgent and repeated messages were sent from Kinsale to the dilatory Earl, imploring his co-operation, and yet week after week passed and he made no sign. The only possible explanation which presents itself to the modern student of the situation is that, now that the long-expected crisis had arrived, he shrank from facing it.

In October he made a show of moving south, but succeeded in getting no further than Louth and Meath, where, taking advantage of the absence of the Deputy and his armed forces, he wasted six valuable weeks in ravaging those defenceless counties. There is no incident in Tyrone's career that more clearly stamps the innate meanness of the man's soul than this wanton and insensate act of destruction. Though the allies who had come to his aid were calling to him with all their voice to join them in striking the long-promised blow, and though the opportunity for striking that blow was unique and never to be repeated, he could not prevail upon himself to face serious fighting while the safer and more congenial paths of devastation lay open to him. Friend and foe alike, in Louth and Meath, were sacrificed to the shallow desire to let his allies see that, even though he was not at their side, he was still a power for destruction. It was part of his nature to see no distinction between brigandage and battle. To his parochial mind—fed, it must be owned, on the traditions of the country—the destruction of the defenceless seemed to offer the cheapest, and, at

the same time, the most telling advertisement of military supremacy. He hoped the Spaniards would be impressed. It is not surprising that, far from being impressed, the Spaniards viewed the proceedings with a noble contempt. Already they were beginning to realize that they were dealing with a man whose performances had no relation to his boasts. They were to realize it still more painfully before they had seen the last of Ireland. Even when he had completed his devastation of Louth and Meath, he could not persuade himself to face the inevitable. He actually went back once more to Dungannon, and, in the inglorious security of his chief stronghold, wasted more precious time, while Mountjoy was steadily accumulating reinforcements. Hugh Roe and O'Rourke had already, in obedience to his orders, led their forces south, the former being accompanied by two horses carrying locked hampers full of Spanish money. Tyrone had arranged to meet him first at Granard, and later on at Holy Cross in Tipperary. He failed to keep either appointment, and in the end Hugh Roe, in disgust, went on alone to Castlehaven, where he ultimately joined up with the second contingent of Spaniards. It was the end of November before Tyrone, shamed at last in some part by the bitter reproaches of his allies, finally made up his mind to face that which could no longer by any chicanery be put off. To the last he showed more concern for the preservation of his own landed interests in Ulster than for the freedom of Ireland, or the supremacy of the Roman Catholic Church. His eldest son Hugh was left behind as his deputy. Con, the illegitimate, was also left behind on account of bad health. He had received a serious wound in the last Munster campaign, from the effects of which he shortly afterwards died. O'Cahan was left in charge of Coleraine, and Cormac O'Neil in charge of Newtown, which Doewra had so far failed to recapture. The other Cormac (McBaron), Tyrone at first took with him, but subsequently sent him back to keep an eye on the administration of his son Hugh, in whom he had no special confidence. Art McBaron was left in charge of the Blackwater country, while Art's two sons Henry and Brian watched Tyrone's interests in Clandeboy. For the rest, the Fews—which had been made over to Con O'Neil when Tirlough McHenry joined Mountjoy—was now assigned to the care of the O'Hagans.

It is a curious fact that when the most fateful Irish battle

of Elizabeth's reign was fought, a battle which, in the opinion of high and low alike, was to decide the fate of Ireland for evermore, every chief and petty chief in Ulster managed to absent himself, except Tyrone himself and Randall McSorley. The latter marched south with the Earl at the head of 120 Scots, which represented the full complement that he was able to put in the field, and the sum total of Scots engaged. Even Tyrone's bodyguard was now Irish.

Tyrone marched south with, no doubt, the very best of intentions till West Meath was reached, but here the temptation to once more pillage Sir Theobald Dillon's tenants proved too strong, and much valuable time was wasted in this congenial occupation.* Eventually, on December 21st, Kinsale was reached, and Tyrone pitched his camp on the north bank of the Owneboy River, in a well-chosen position, which threatened, though it did not actually cut, Mountjoy's lines of communication with Cork. Mountjoy was now in a more or less critical position, being sandwiched in between the Spanish and the Irish armies. His strength, which had at one time reached 8,000 men, had been gradually reduced by continual sickness, the men dying at the rate of from twelve to fifteen daily. At the date of Tyrone's arrival on the scene he could with difficulty muster 6,000 men, and of these many were incapacitated by sickness and privations. On the other hand, the Spanish and Irish combined were able to muster well over 13,000 men. Don Juan D'Aquila, the Spanish Commander, who for three months past had been chafing with impatience at the non-appearance of his Irish allies, lost no time in getting into communication with the newly-arrived Earl. It was arranged between them that, on the night of the 23rd, the English camp should be suddenly and simultaneously attacked from the south by the Spaniards and from the north by the Irish. The plan was strategically sound, and had it been kept secret ought, by all the rules of warfare, to have succeeded. It was, however, given away in the following curious manner by Brian McHugh Oge McMahon, of Monaghan rebellion fame. Brian's son had been page to Sir George Carew in England, and, on the strength of this family tie, Brian sent over a boy to Captain Taaffe on the night of the 22nd, asking him to procure for his special consumption a bottle of whisky from Carew, who was now

* Four Masters.

Lord President of Munster. Taaffe succeeded in getting the whisky, and in return for it was warned that Tyrone and Don Juan meant attacking simultaneously on the following night.* On the strength of this warning, Mountjoy's men stood to arms all through the night of the 23rd, and just before daybreak were rewarded by seeing the lights of Tyrone's advance scouts approaching. Mountjoy left Sir George Carew with the bulk of the forces to defend the camp against the threatened Spanish attack from the south, and, with the Marshal (Wingfield), the young Earl of Clanricard, Sir Henry Power and Sir Richard Graham, rode out to meet the attack. Sir George Carew, both in his letter to Cecil and in his "*Pacata Hibernia*," states that Mountjoy had with him 1,200 foot and 400 horse. Mountjoy, himself, however, in a letter to the Privy Council, which is preserved in the Trevelyan Papers, distinctly states that he had 2,000 foot and between 300 and 400 horse with him. As a matter of fact, the number of foot that accompanied him is immaterial, as they never came into action.

On the other side, Tyrone, according to Alonzo del Campo, had 6,000 foot and 500 horse.† This Spaniard had, shortly before the battle, landed with the second contingent of invaders at Castlehaven, and had managed to join Tyrone's force with 200 of his own men. On seeing the great numerical inferiority of Mountjoy's force, del Campo urged Tyrone to an immediate attack, but the Earl pleaded that his force was not in proper formation, and, instead of attacking, actually withdrew two miles,‡ till he had placed a boggy ford between his army and the Deputy. Here he turned and faced about. His horse were on his left, his foot in the centre, and del Campo with his 200 Spaniards on the right.

The battle which followed is probably the most remarkable in history. It was the first time that Tyrone, or in all probability any of those under him, had ever faced battle in the open plain, and the result was not such as to encourage a repetition of the experiment.

After some musket-shots had been exchanged across the bog, by one of which Sir Richard Graham was killed, Wingfield the Marshal, with half his horse, made a detour to the right and floundered through the edge of the bog, close to where Tyrone's horse were drawn up on the left of his line. Having

* "*Pacata Hibernia*." † Fynes Moryson. ‡ Trevelyan Papers.

reached firm ground (which he should never have been allowed to do), Wingfield then charged the Irish horse, but without any success, for these stood firm; upon seeing which, he wheeled his men about and waited till the balance of his horse had crossed the bog and joined him. The combined party then renewed the charge, and this time the Irish did not await it, but turned tail and galloped off through the thick of their own infantry.* An absolute panic ensued. The Irish foot threw away their arms and ran to any cover that offered, pursued by the English horse. The two hundred Spaniards on the right of the line—to their infinite credit—did not join in the general stampede. They retired to an adjoining hill, where they gallantly defended themselves till all were killed except del Campo and thirty-seven others, who were taken prisoners.† “A Journal of Affairs at Kinsale,” dated January 9th, 1602,‡ says of this incident: “The Irish ran away. The Spaniards, like amazed men, cursing the day that ever they came to Ireland, themselves made a stand. Many of them were killed, the rest holding themselves to merey. The pursuit continued for one and a half miles, to the utter shame of the Irish rebels, until the horse were out of breath in running and the horsemen wearied with killing.”

In this most astonishing affair all accounts agree in placing the number of killed in the neighbourhood of twelve hundred, irrespective of the many who escaped with bad wounds from which they subsequently died. Two thousand muskets were also gathered up, which had been thrown away by the fleeing infantry. On the English side, Sir Richard Graham was the only man killed.

In defence of the otherwise inexcusable flight of the Irish foot, it must be urged that they were first of all thrown into confusion by the disgraceful conduct of their own horsemen, among whom was included every chief and sept leader. It is eloquent of the rapidity with which all the leaders retired from the field that the only name of note which figures in the list of killed is that of Tirlough O'Hagan.§

Hugh Roe was not present on the occasion of the battle||—if such it can be called. He pleaded having lost his way in a

* Sir Henry Power to Cecil, Dec. 27th, 1601.

† Fynes Moryson. ‡ Cal. State Papers. § Fynes Moryson.

|| Sir Francis Stafford to Cecil, Jan. 14th, 1602.

fog, but this excuse may be accepted with reservation, for the O'Donnell had little more liking for a fight in the open than had his father-in-law.* The most prominent figures on the English side during the affair were the Marshal and the Earl of Clanricard. The latter was very forward in the pursuit, and was subsequently knighted on the field by the Deputy.†

The State Papers provide no explanation of the non-co-operation of Don Juan from the south. A reasonable assumption would appear to be that the Spanish commander was waiting for Tyrone to attack as agreed. Tyrone's heart failed him at the last moment, and he did not attack, but, on the contrary, retired two miles to a spot which was completely out of sight and hearing of the Spanish commander, who waited in vain for the signal which had been agreed upon.

* The Four Masters—who were Donegal men—represent their chief as not only being present, but as delivering an impassioned address to the fleeing Irish, in which he besought them to be worthy of the deeds of their heroic ancestors, but all historians agree that he was nowhere near the scene of the fight

† “*Pacata Hibernia.*”

CHAPTER XXXV

Tyrone's return to Ulster—Trying experiences of the defeated army—They are murdered in numbers by the peasants—Hugh Roe's prophecy fulfilled—He sails for Spain—Henry Oge's scornful reproof of Tyrone—Don Juan D'Aquila's appeal to Mountjoy—The return of the Spaniards to Spain—Sir James McDonnell breaks loose from Dunluce and captures the Castle—Tyrone's diplomacy—Sir James restores the Castle to Randall McSorley and marries Tyrone's daughter—Arrival on the scene of Angus—His indignation with his son—He hangs some of his men.

A CHRONICLE of Ulster events has no legitimate concern with affairs in the south, except in so far as such affairs may have a bearing on the fortunes of the Ulster chiefs. We may therefore deal very briefly with the final stages of the Spanish invasion.

From the moment of his defeat, Tyrone made hot haste to get back to the north, bitterly regretting, no doubt, that he had ever left it. He himself was carried in a litter, which travelled with remarkable speed, and we may be quite sure—from what we know of his character and of the customs of the times—that during his flight he wasted never a thought on the safety of the rank and file of his defeated army. That rank and file fared very badly indeed. They were drowned in crossing flooded rivers, they were murdered by the country people. Their casualties in the return to Ulster were greater even than those sustained in the defeat itself.* We are furnished with full particulars of this retreat from the mouth of one Shane Sheale, who acted as Tyrone's trumpeter throughout the expedition, but who afterwards deserted to Sir Francis Stafford at Newry. Shane Sheale favours us with a graphic description of how "they that did kiss them in their going forward, did both strip them and shoot bullets at them in their return, and for their arms did drown them and tread them down in every bog and soft place under their feet."† The Four Masters bear out this

* Sir Francis Stafford to Cecil, Jan. 14th, 1602.

† *Ibid.*

statement of Shane's, and also draw attention to the fact that Hugh Roe had warned Tyrone that it would be so. "The surmise of the Prince O'Donnell," they write, "was verified, for their former friends and confederates rose up and were attacking and shooting them on every narrow road through which they passed." The Prince O'Donnell, however, had no intention of being one of the victims, for, on the Sunday after the defeat, he sailed from Castlehaven for Spain, where he died a year later at Valladolid.

The sacred person of the O'Neil safely surmounted all these dangers. On January 7th he reached O'Reilly in Cavan; on the 8th he was in Monaghan, and on the 9th he rested at the house of his son-in-law, Henry Oge, at Kinard.* Tyrone bitterly reproached the other with having persuaded him—against his own inclinations—to go to Munster. To this Henry Oge very pointedly replied: "O'Neil, though I persuaded you to go the journey, I would not have had you run away, but to have stayed and tried your strength."

The last stages of Don Juan D'Aquila's ill-fated expedition may now be briefly disposed of. After the painful collapse of his Irish allies, there was clearly nothing for the Spaniard to do but to return to his own country with all the speed possible, and with as little loss of dignity as the circumstances permitted of. Accordingly, on the last day of December he wrote Mountjoy the following letter: "Having found the Deputy—although a sharp and powerful opponent—yet an honourable enemy, and the Irish not only weak and barbarous, but (as he feared) perfidious friends, he was so far in his affection reconciled to the one and distated with the other as did invite him to make an overture of such composition as might be safe and profitable for the State of England, with less prejudice to the King of Spain, by delivering into the Deputy's power the town of Kinsale, with all other places in Ireland held by the Spaniards, so as they might depend upon honourable terms fitting such men of war as are not by necessity enforced to receive conditions, but willingly induced for just respects to disengage themselves, and to relinquish a people by whom their King and master had been so notoriously abused, if not betrayed."†

In reply to this pompous effusion Mountjoy, in the first

* Sir F. Stafford to Cecil, Jan. 14th, 1602.

† "Pacata Hibernia."

instance, sent Sir William Godolphin to open negotiations on the basis of security of life and property to the Spaniards, in consideration of their immediate evacuation of Kinsale. To this Don Juan agreed, undertaking that he and all his men would set sail for Spain in their own ships on the very first occasion on which favourable winds offered. Unfortunately, the winds remained consistently unfavourable till the 9th day of March, on which date the wind shifted to the north-east, and Don Juan and his disbanded army set sail for their native land. On the following day Mountjoy returned north.

With the battle of Kinsale, Tyrone's long spun-out rebellion may be said to have breathed its last. From that time on the Earl became a hunted man, only avoiding capture by hiding in inaccessible fastnesses, and by shifting continually from one refuge to another. There is little profit in the contemplation of a fallen idol, and still less in the pursuit of a hunted fugitive. Whether the quarry be a fox or a stag or a rebel Earl, whether he be a persecuted refugee or an execrable murderer, the sympathies of those who look on must ever be, in great part, with the hunted.

In this, then, the last Act of that curious comedy, known as Tyrone's rebellion, there will be little advantage or even interest in dwelling unduly on a contest in which the sides are no longer equal. One hope only remained to Tyrone, and that was a forlorn one. If he could regain the goodwill of the Scots, he might still be able to put an army in the field that would hold his pursuers at bay till the death of the Queen—now reasonably to be expected at any moment—opened a new political era in the history of the island. Tyrone angled for this overseas help with all his customary diplomatic skill, taking every advantage of the strange modifications in the McDonnell position in Ulster, which had developed since he started for the south. These were briefly as follows: Randall McSorley, when he marched south with Tyrone, had left Sir James McDonnell a prisoner in Dunluce Castle, and his younger brother Ness in charge of the Glynnns. Ness, in spite of his inexperience, seems to have discharged his trust with credit to his family, but in the Route district Randall's dispositions proved less fortunate, for he had no sooner turned his back on Dunluce than his prisoner managed not only to break loose from confinement, but, with the aid of some of the warders, to

get the Castle into his own hands. Unmindful of the fact, or perhaps too mindful of the fact, that he had been taken prisoner by Randall in the very act of offering his services to the rebel Earl, Sir James, in a sudden access of loyalty, now announced that he was holding Dunluce Castle for the Queen. To this announcement, no doubt mainly inspired by the news of the Kinsale defeat, Randall had no effective retort to offer. Dunluce was a place of almost impregnable strength, and to have attempted its recapture with the draggled remnant that had escaped the carnage of Kinsale would have been a hopeless undertaking. At the same time, its recovery was a matter of vital importance to him. In the difficulties arising out of this situation, Tyrone's diplomatic genius found its opportunity. Using to the full his remarkable powers of persuasion, he was able to convince Sir James that it was to his interest to give up the Castle, and to take in exchange one of his own innumerable daughters, who was produced for the occasion, and who may, for all we know, have been as fair as the incomparable Sara whom he had married to Magennis. In any event, Sir James, undeterred by the fact that he already had a wife in Scotland, agreed to the exchange, and the compact was duly ratified.

By this crafty move Tyrone secured at one stroke the valuable gratitude of Randall, and a new son-in-law, who, in the event of Angus's death, would have been chief of the Island McDonnells, and in a position to bring to his aid a powerful Scotch army.

At the moment of triumph, however, a disturbing factor suddenly made its appearance on the scene in the shape of Angus himself, who, old as he was, was by no means disposed to be left out of any arrangements affecting the clan of which he was still chief. Angus had been highly interested at the news of his eldest son's capture of the much-desired Dunluce Castle, and, brushing aside the memory of their recent differences, he sent over congratulatory messages backed up by the proposal that he himself should shortly follow with five hundred Scots to consolidate the newly-acquired position. To this friendly offer James made no response, being at the moment too fully occupied with the details of his recent transfer of property. Angus, however, was not to be discouraged, and as soon as his preparations were complete, he set sail with his five hundred

men, and in due course arrived at Dunluce, only to find the Castle once more in the possession of Randall and his son the complacent dupe of the scheming Earl. Angus's rage was only equalled by his contemptuous disgust for his son's weakness. Feeling the need of a safety-valve for his feelings, he hanged several of Sir James's men,* after which he was able to sit down in a more equable frame of mind and discuss the situation with his son. The interview started very stormily, but we are told that "after a few cups" there was a complete reconciliation between father and son, and Angus set sail for Scotland, to the pronounced relief of the survivors among Sir James's men.

Tyrone's diplomacy did not in the end produce the armed auxiliaries that he had looked for, but it was not altogether barren of beneficial results to himself. Sir James was never of any use to him. Shortly after his marriage he crossed the Bann with his new bride, stayed for a time with O'Cahan, another of Tyrone's son-in-laws, and then made his way back to Scotland, whether with or without his bride we do not know; but the probability is that he left her with her sister. If so, Tyrone shortly afterwards had two of his married daughters back on his hands, for O'Cahan grew tired of his own wife in 1607, and sent her back to her father.† From Randall, however, Tyrone secured a return for his good offices, which, though it did not take the form of auxiliary Scots, was later on of inestimable value to him in his most urgent needs, as will presently be seen.

* Chichester to Cecil, June 8th, 1604.

† Meehan's "Earls of Tyrone and Tyreconnell." See also Earl of Tyrone's Articles: Cal. State Papers: James, 502.

CHAPTER XXXVI

Mountjoy pursues the defeated Earl into Ulster—He builds a fort at Charlemount—He destroys the Tullahogue stone—Tyrone in Glenconkein—Randall McSorley shows gratitude for the restoration of Dunluce—Doewra and Chichester co-operate with the Deputy—Mountjoy fort—Capture of Castle Toome—Mountjoy's expedition into Monaghan—Death of Sir John Berkeley and Captain Willis—Mountjoy's food difficulties—Doewra's expedition to Dungiven—Death of Hugh Boy McDavitt—Doewra's high opinion of him—Tyrone takes refuge with O'Rourke—Rumours of a fresh Spanish landing—Mountjoy hurries south—Seizure of Cormac MeBaron's cattle—Capture of Augher Castle—Connor Roe and Cuconnaught Maguire—The Ulster garrisons—Mountjoy transports the Dungannon natives into Armagh—Henry and Con MeShane—The lands allotted to them.

IT was by no means a part of Mountjoy's policy that the moral effect of the Kinsale victory should be allowed to wane through undue inactivity on his part. In June he was once more in Ulster, hot on the trail of the discredited Earl. His army had preceded him to Newry, which he himself reached on the 10th. On the 14th he moved on to Armagh, and the following day found him once more at the Blackwater. No opposition was met with, and a leisured examination of the whole position persuaded Mountjoy that the old Blackwater fort was by no means at the best or most convenient spot. He discovered a ford five miles to the east, in Tirlough Braselagh's country, which was easier of access from Armagh, and which had the further advantage of being only six miles from Dungannon. Here he set to work to construct a bridge and a new fort, which he named Charlemount, and which, when completed, was left in charge of Captain Toby Caulfield. During the preliminary survey of the selected ground the flames of Tyrone's dwelling-house at Dungannon could be plainly seen reddening the sky to the north-west,* and on the third day Sir Richard Moryson was sent on with his regiment to take

* Tyrone's Castle had been burned by his own hand in a panic on the occasion of Norris's advance to the Blackwater in 1595. At the date of Mountjoy's invasion, Tyrone was living in a wooden house thatched with rushes. See Cal. State Papers, March, 1602.

possession. Mountjoy, with the rest of the army, followed a few days later.

One of Mountjoy's first acts after arriving at Dungannon was to make a journey to Tullahogue, where, with the idea of helping the native mind to a realization of the broken power of the O'Neil, he completely demolished the historic Leac-na-Righ, or coronation stone, which for centuries had invested its chosen occupant with a semi-divine status. This iconoclastic act having been carried out with fitting advertisement and ceremonial,* Mountjoy returned to Dungannon, and, by way of double-marking the contrast between the old order and the new, gave the natives an educational display of English authority by dispensing justice to all comers, high and low alike, for several days.

The deposed Prince of Ulster was all this time in hiding in the wooded wilds of Glenconkein, whither he had withdrawn with a small but devoted following, and whither Mountjoy's food resources did not at the moment permit of his penetrating. His present policy was rather to starve the Earl out, and this there is little doubt that he would soon have succeeded in doing but for the intervention of the grateful Randall MeSorley, to whom Tyrone sent his wife with a reminder of his late services and with an appeal for help. One can hardly doubt that Randall's ready response was dictated mainly by gratitude for Tyrone's recent friendly mediation in the matter of Dunluce Castle, for no Ulsterman could any longer deceive himself as to the hopeless state of the Earl's fortunes, both present and future. Randall must have seen this as clearly as anyone, but it did not influence his conduct towards his late benefactor, and during the entire period of Tyrone's concealment in Glenconkein he sent him periodical consignments of wine, whisky, meal and salt.†

In the meanwhile, the question of Mountjoy's own food supplies were causing him no little concern. To keep his forces supplied with the necessaries of life, foraging parties were sent out in all directions, even as far as Lough Erne, with orders to bring in everything edible which could be found. The keeping together of his force at this time was essential to the consum-

* The Tullahogue stone stood in the centre of a raised encampment surrounded by the remains of a moat and in the shadow of a ruin which had once been the ancestral home of the O'Hagans.

† Sir Thomas Phillips to Cecil, July 27th, 1602.

mation of his schemes, for several projects of the first importance still remained to be carried through. In furtherance of these, or of some of them, Doewra, acting under orders from headquarters, came over from Omagh on July 14th for a consultation with the Lord Deputy, while Chichester at the same time crossed Lough Neagh with his lately recovered flotilla of boats and arrived at Dungannon the day after the Derry Governor. As soon as the three leaders were assembled, an expedition was organized to the end of Lough Neagh, where, at the junction of the Blackwater and the Lough, the Deputy had resolved to erect a new fort to which the appropriate name of Mountjoy was to be given. Both this fort, which when completed was capable of holding over one thousand men, and Charlemount were destined to play a very prominent part in the rebellion of 1641. Chichester was nominated Governor of Mountjoy, and Captain Francis Roe was left to supervise the building and to take charge when completed. From the mouth of the Blackwater Mountjoy moved along the western shore of the Lough as far as the exit of the Bann, where he occupied and garrisoned Castle Toome, leaving Sir Thomas Phillips in charge. The occupation of this latter fort was of the very first importance, for it completely commanded the only passage into Tyrone across the Bann from Clondeboyne and the Glynns.

The effect of these admirable dispositions of Mountjoy was that, with the Blackwater, Charlemount, Mountjoy and Castle Toome in his hands, he formed an impassable barrier right across Tyrone's country; for the passage of Lough Neagh itself was only practicable for the native craft in the very calmest weather,

On returning to Dungannon, Mountjoy arranged with his two subordinate commanders a concerted movement which was to take effect on August 10th. On that date it was arranged that the three detachments were to close in-simultaneously on Tyrone, Doewra working up from Omagh *via* Dungiven, Chichester moving west from the Mountjoy fort, and the Deputy himself pressing north from Dungannon through Killeteagh. These arrangements completed, the parties separated, after spending ten eventful days together at Dungannon. Doewra returned to Derry, while Mountjoy led a flying column to Lough Erne, where he captured and ransacked several of Tyrone's island strongholds.

From Lough Erne Mountjoy moved east into County Monaghan, where, in conformity with his scheme of wasting the enemy's country, he destroyed all the crops in Dartrey (the country of Brian McHugh Oge, the principal McMahon rebel), and so returned, fairly satisfied, to Dungannon. That these operations were not unattended with danger is made clear by the fact that both Sir John Berkeley, the sergeant-major to the army, and the scarcely less famous Captain Willis were killed during the tour.*

The combined advance into Glenconkein, which had been arranged for August 10th, did not take place, as Mountjoy's devastating policy now began to react on himself, and it was found impossible to provision the troops. The army victuallers added to his difficulties in this direction by selling the stores which were destined for the army to the starving natives, who were willing to offer any price for them.† Gaunt famine, in fact, was beginning to fix its hold on the greater part of east Ulster, and Mountjoy, in his letters to England, dwells constantly and painfully on the extreme privations that he and his army were enduring, as the result of his zeal in the Queen's interest. In the end Docwra was the only one of the three to carry out the contemplated movement, Mountjoy's message countermanding the arrangements having, by some mischance, failed to reach him. The food difficulties which so embarrassed his colleagues did not touch Docwra, who had been a most half-hearted apostle of the general policy of devastation, and whose district was, in consequence, still sufficiently productive to raise it clear above all question of food-shortage. Taking with him Neil Garv, young Cahir O'Dogherty and Hugh Boy, he started out from Omagh on the date agreed upon, and got as far as Dungiven Castle, which he occupied, and from there made a successful raid into the outskirts of Glenconkein, driving in one hundred and sixty of Tyrone's cattle. Satisfied with these results, and realizing by this time that Mountjoy and Chichester were not collaborating, he deemed it advisable to return to Omagh. Neil Garv and Cahir O'Dogherty went with him, but Hugh Boy remained behind and followed on the day after. On the road, to Docwra's very great grief, this young man was waylaid and murdered. There is no reason to suppose that the murder was in any way political. "He was set upon

* Fynes Moryson.

† *Ibid.*

and slain," Docwra tells us, "by a party of loose fellows that fell upon him by chance. A man whom I found faithful and honest, let envy and ignorance say what they will to the contrary."* Hugh Boy left two brothers, of whom the elder, Phelim Reagh, subsequently played a very prominent part in O'Dogherty's rebellion of 1608.

Docwra's seizure of cattle in Glenconkein was not only a serious blow to Tyrone's commissariat, but it also made it painfully clear to him that Glenconkein was no longer the inaccessible retreat that it had always been reckoned. The three English commanders were too near him on every side to be pleasant, and he determined to slip out of their clutches while he could. He accordingly undertook one of those long forced rides for which he was famous. Turning his back on Glenconkein, he rode south till he reached Lough Erne, which he crossed into O'Rourke's country. Here he was joined by Cormac McBaron, Brian McArt and Brian McHugh Oge,† all three of whom were no less glad than Tyrone to put Lough Erne between them and the energetic Deputy. O'Rourke was at the time the only rebel chief still remaining on his own ground (Leitrim). The strength of his position lay in the long protective barrier formed by the many ramifications of Lough Erne, which, except at one or two recognized spots, was reckoned to be impassable for anything in the nature of an army. Luck on this occasion favoured the Earl, for any question of immediate pursuit was put out of court by a rumour which now reached Ulster that the Spaniards had once more effected a landing at Berehaven. Such rumours, even though unfounded, were not to be ignored, and on September 9th Mountjoy hurried away south to investigate the extent of this new danger. The rumour proved to be without any foundation, but other matters engaged the Deputy's attention, and it was winter before he found himself once more in the north. His first objective was Tyrone's new retreat. Early in December, undeterred by the inclemency of the season, he invaded O'Rourke's country. The expedition was not unproductive of results, for on the 14th O'Connor Sligo and Rory O'Donnell (Hugh Roe's younger brother) came in and made submission. O'Rourke himself and Cuconnaught Maguire (a younger brother of Hugh Maguire) still remained "out," and the Earl, on the first news of Mount-

* Docwra Narration.

† Deputy to Cecil, Oct. 12th, 1602.

joy's approach, had once more put Lough Erne between himself and the Deputy, and had scurried back to Glenconkein, where he remained till his final submission.

In the meanwhile, Doewra, ever since his return from the Dungiven expedition, had made Omagh his head-quarters, as being more centrally situated than Derry. While lying there, news was brought to him that there was a happy opportunity for putting himself in possession of some of Cormac McBaron's cattle, which were most obligingly grazing in the vicinity. Following the information given, he at once set out on the welcome quest for meat, but unfortunately the cattle proved to be further afield than was anticipated. A considerable distance had to be covered, and while driving their prey home Doewra's party was repeatedly attacked from the thick woods on either side. The cattle, four hundred in number, were safely brought to Omagh, but Doewra lost twenty-five men in the enterprise. Cahir O'Dogherty, who was only fifteen years old at the time, is specially mentioned as having behaved very well during the fighting, and both he and Neil Garv were knighted by the Deputy two days later for the worthy part they had played.

Moving out from Omagh shortly afterwards, Doewra met Mountjoy and Chichester by appointment eight miles west of Dungannon, and from there the three leaders, encouraged by the successful seizure of Cormac McBaron's cattle, determined to complete the subjugation of that bad subject by raiding his Castle at Augher. The Castle, which was found to be unoccupied, was a pretentious place, sufficiently strongly moated to be described as an island. Two brass sakers crowned the battlements, and the whole place was of commanding strength and of very considerable size, as may be judged from the fact that it was decided to leave Captain Hansard there with no fewer than four hundred men.*

In place of attempting, in the depths of winter and with provisions at a very low ebb, to pursue Tyrone into the wild and thickly-wooded region of Glenconkein, Mountjoy deemed it more profitable to bend his energies to the question of political reform. He began by offering a free pardon to Cuconnaught Maguire if he would agree to divide up Fermanagh between himself and Connor Roe Maguire, leaving Enniskillen to the

* Doewra Narration.

Queen.* Cuconnaught was sufficiently ill-advised to refuse an offer which—all things considered—was surprisingly generous; whereupon Mountjoy erased his name from the list of reconcilables, and established the faithful Connor Roe in the temporary lordship over, not only the whole of Fermanagh, but the whole of Monaghan as well, with the exception of Farney. In token of his exalted command, Connor Roe was now established in Brian McHugh Oge's chief house, which stood on the border between the two counties. A garrison of seven hundred men was left at Monaghan to lend its support, if necessary, to his extended rule, and for the time being the fortunes of Connor Roe Maguire were decidedly in the ascendant.† The other Government garrisons in Ulster were returned in November of this year (1602) as follows: Newry, 250; Mount Norris, 350; Armagh, 250; Blackwater, 250; Charlemount, 250; Dungannon, 170; Mountjoy, 1,200; Carrickfergus and district, 1,000, and Lough Foyle, 1,800.

In spite of his demolition of the Tullahogue stone, it was no part of Mountjoy's policy to obliterate the line of Nial of the Nine Hostages. What he chiefly aimed at was to put an end to the noxious apotheosis which the stone—and the "brutish ceremonies" surrounding it—conferred. Henry and Con McShane were once more at large, and these two unfortunate brothers he now established in the lordship of the country immediately north and south of the Blackwater. The country north of the river had been wasted, but not so on the south side, and Mountjoy, out of pity for the wretched state of the natives in Tyrone proper, moved as many of them as he could across the water into County Armagh.‡ The famine, however, had already taken its toll of victims. According to the O'Hagans, three thousand died during the year 1602,§ but this figure, in common with most of the statistical returns of the day from Ireland, may be safely brushed aside as an absurd

* Fynes Moryson.

† Cuconnaught afterwards agreed to divide the county with Connor Roe, but the arrangement was never an amicable one, and the two fought continually till Cuconnaught fled the country with Tyrone. After that Connor Roe was apportioned three out of the seven baronies of Fermanagh, his younger brother Brian succeeding to the four baronies vacated by Cuconnaught. Later on, however, Connor Roe relinquished two of his baronies in consideration of an annual grant of £200 a year, and £50 a year to his son after his death. He retained the barony of Magherasteffana. See Chichester to the Lords, Sept. 12th, 1606; also Carew MSS., 1611-91, and Cal. State Papers: James, 1608-97.

‡ Fynes Moryson.

§ *Ibid.*

exaggeration. None the less, the mortality was undoubtedly high. Another six months, however, had to elapse before it was at its worst.

The two sons of Shane, with their energies atrophied by long imprisonment, quickly proved that they were quite incapable of exercising any authority over the district allotted to them, and they were both called upon to abdicate in favour of Henry McShane's eldest son, known as Sir Henry Oge. For the time being accommodation for both Shane's sons was found in Fermanagh, but in the Plantation shuffle of 1610 Henry McShane was finally allotted two thousand acres in Orior, Co. Armagh, and Con one thousand acres in Coole and Tir-kennedy, Co. Fermanagh.*

* See Pynnar's Survey, 1618.

CHAPTER XXXVII

The Queen's offer of pardon to Tyrone—Death of Queen Elizabeth—Dispatch of Garrett Moore and Sir William Godolphin to Tullahogue—They return with Tyrone to Mellifont—His submission—They journey up to Dublin—Tyrone's second submission—His grief at the news of Elizabeth's death—Tyrone is restored to his old lands—Desolation of eastern Ulster—Horrible incidents of the famine—Limited scope of the famine—Population census in 1609—Mountjoy appointed Lord-Lieutenant—He sails for England with Tyrone and Rory O'Donnell—Tyrone pelted with mud by the Welsh women—Rory O'Donnell created Earl of Tyrconnell—Rivalry of Neil Garv and Rory O'Donnell for the chieftry of Donegal—Docwra's epitome of Neil Garv's record—Neil Garv has himself proclaimed the O'Donnell—He is arrested and placed on parole—He breaks his parole and so vitiates his chances of the succession—Mountjoy's unaccountable bias in favour of Tyrone—Tyrone's hatred and jealousy of Neil Garv—Tirlough McArt O'Neil—His popularity—Neil Garv is granted the Finn valley—His discontent—His complicity in O'Dogherty's rebellion—Tirlough McArt is granted Newtown and Strabane—He is subsequently removed to Dungannon—O'Dogherty and Inch Island—Mountjoy's questionable action—The King espouses O'Dogherty's cause—His commands disregarded—O'Cahan and the independence of Coleraine—Docwra's advocacy of his cause—Mountjoy's unconquerable bias—Docwra's disgrace—He sells his interests in Derry to Paulet.

BY the end of the winter of 1602 to 1603 the Earl of Tyrone, Caeonnaught Maguire and O'Rourke were the only three chiefs in the north who still remained proclaimed and unrepentant rebels. These three Mountjoy determined to leave alone for the winter and to pursue into their last refuges upon the approach of spring. This last step, however, became unnecessary, owing to the unexpected turn which events took in the early spring of 1603. On February 6th the Queen wrote to Mountjoy commanding him to send for Tyrone and offer him life and liberty. This was not, as might be supposed, a spontaneous act of generosity on the part of Elizabeth, prompted by the knowledge that she was near her end. It was a belated response to repeated suggestions in that direction thrown out by Mountjoy himself, who had been specifically forbidden to grant the rebel any pardon on his own responsibility. "Tyrone doth continually importune me to be received to mercy," he had written to Cecil in June of the previous year.

At that time, however, Elizabeth had very serious doubts as to the honesty of the Earl's professions. A variety of chance disclosures had for some years past come to her knowledge, and had persuaded the Queen that Tyrone was not, and never could be, true; and the event proved how very right she was. In this belief she had the support of Cecil. In reply to William Warren's ardent advocacy of Tyrone's sincerity of purpose, Cecil had written in 1599: "I can affirm upon my faith to Almighty God that, in Sir John Norris's time, both himself and myself did especially labour to have had him [Tyrone] received into Her Majesty's mercy upon any reasonable conditions; to which she also was inclinable. But that by one means or another, still the governors and others discovered palpable perfidious dealing in him, even against the most merciful and most gracious Prince that the earth do carry."* In harbouring her suspicions, Elizabeth's remarkable sagacity, as events proved, was not at fault. She had properly gauged the undependable nature of the man she had to deal with, but when sickness took hold of her, and the end loomed in sight, her mood softened. She wrote, as above described, authorizing her Deputy to receive the rebel to mercy. Ten days later she followed this up with another letter, in which Mountjoy was told to add the offer of pardon to that of life and liberty—the word "pardon," in this sense, bearing the construction of a promise of restitution, in all respects, to the *status in quo ante*. By the same messenger, Cecil himself wrote to the Deputy, further explaining the Queen's mood, and suggesting that, in the bestowal of the pardon, Tyrone should be degraded from the rank of Earl to that of Baron of Dungannon, as a sign of the Queen's disapproval of his past conduct. Acting on these instructions, Mountjoy, who at the time was staying with Sir Edward Moore at Mellifont Abbey, sent Garrett Moore and Sir William Godolphin on an embassy to Tyrone with the Queen's offer. This was on March 25th. The Queen, as a matter of fact, had died the previous day, but Mountjoy did not hear of this calamity till the night of the 27th.† The moment he learnt the news, he dispatched a messenger post-haste after Godolphin, urging him to conclude Tyrone's matter with all possible speed.

In the meanwhile, the commissioners had arrived at Charle-

* Cecil to William Warren, Nov. 6th, 1599. † Fynes Moryson.

mount, and from there Garrett Moore went on to Tullahogue, where he had a private interview with Tyrone, as a result of which Henry O'Hagan was sent to Godolphin with the Earl's formal acceptance of the Queen's gracious pardon. Godolphin and O'Hagan then rode back together as far as Toker, five miles from Dungannon, where they met Tyrone and Garrett Moore. The whole party then turned their horses' heads in the direction of Mellifont, which was reached on March 30th. Here Tyrone knelt for an hour before Mountjoy, reciting his submission with all the moving eloquence of which he was such a master. Four days later the party rode to Drogheda, and the following day went on to Dublin, where Tyrone for the first time learnt of the death of the Queen. On receipt of the news, he burst into loud and prolonged weeping, as he declared "for tender sorrow at the loss of his Sovereign Mistress" (who had been hunting him for ten years), but more probably owing to the reflection that he had wasted his submission.

On April 8th the unfortunate Earl had once more to take to his knees, and go through the whole performance of submission again, this time in the presence of the Deputy and Privy Council. On the bare face of things Tyrone's treatment was better than he deserved, or even had any right to expect, for he was unconditionally restored to all his old lands, except those reserved for Tirlough McHenry and Sir Henry Oge in County Armagh. As a melancholy fact, however, the nominal restoration of his lands was a barren concession. The only lands which had been spared from devastation were those which were excluded from his grant and given to his half-brother and his son-in-law. In Down and Antrim, and, in a lesser degree, in east Tyrone, grim famine had laid the land bare. Those who had the means to leave the country had migrated to the Pale;* those who had not, starved. Fynes Moryson recounts two horrible incidents. Brian McArt, the landless brigand of east Ulster, having established himself in Killultagh with five hundred ravenous and piratical followers, who devoured the whole country, it became a public duty to dislodge him. Accordingly, early in March, 1603, Sir Arthur Chichester and Sir Richard Moryson undertook an expedition which had the desired effect of driving Brian and his band of brigands out of the country. On their return from this expedition, the two

* Sir John Davies to Cecil, April 19th, 1604.

leaders saw three children by the roadside eating the dead body of their mother, which they were roasting before a slow fire.* People lay dead in the ditches with their mouths green with the herbs they had tried to live on. In Magennis's country some old women were in the habit of keeping themselves in food by lighting a big fire in a field, to which children were attracted by the light and warmth; the children were killed and eaten. One big girl managed to break away and give information, acting on which, Captain Trevor rode out from Newry and found the bones and skulls of the children. The old women were arrested and executed.† It will be noticed that both these tragic incidents occurred in County Down, or in the southern extremity of Antrim.‡ The scope of the actual famine as to which these two cases furnish such a horrible illustration was, in fact, limited to the northern half of Down and the southern half of Antrim, or, in other words, to the district over which Chichester's devastating arm could most easily extend. Here the policy of indiscriminate extermination had been given a full and successful trial, the evidence of which remains to the present day in the shape of the almost exclusively British population by which those parts are now inhabited. Mountjoy had destroyed all food products in the Dungannon district, but he had then neutralized the effect of his work by transporting all the Dungannon natives to the land of plenty south of the Blackwater. The effect of this move was to make the little county of Armagh the most thickly populated district in Ireland. Much that is very foolish and exaggerated has been written as to the extent of the famine of 1603. All Irish writers, and many English ones, depict Mountjoy and Chichester as inhuman monsters who almost depopulated Ulster by means of an artificially produced famine. It is not to be denied that at the end of a ten-year rebellion, recourse was had to this method of warfare as the only means of bringing about peace. The devastation of an enemy's country was at the time universally recognized as a legitimate method of warfare. It was extensively practised on the Continent, and was invariably used by the Irish chiefs in their inter-tribal disputes. Nor can it be urged that even in twentieth-century warfare, similar means of arriving at

* Fynes Moryson. † *Ibid.*

‡ Killultagh was not reckoned as belonging to either Down or Antrim.

victory are not made use of by the most highly civilized nations. To hold up Mountjoy and Chichester to special odium for having used a recognized weapon against the Irish rebels is perhaps within the rights of inflammatory patriotism; but, when sympathy is wooed by the picture of a depopulated Ulster, it is time to leave the sphere of fiction for that of fact. In April, 1609—*i.e.*, six years after the worst period of the famine—Sir Robert Jacobs, Solicitor-General, in furnishing returns for Plantation purposes, estimated that there were 4,000 native Irish fighting men in Armagh, 6,000 in Tyrone and Coleraine, 6,000 in Donegal, and 3,000 each in Monaghan, Cavan and Fermanagh.* Of Down and Antrim he makes no mention, as these two counties were not included in the Plantation scheme. In modern calculations it is reckoned that fighting men may be taken to represent ten per cent. of the total population, so that it is evident that—outside of Down and Antrim—the 1603 famine existed only in patriotic imagination. On the other hand, it must in common justice be recorded that, from the moment of Tyrone's submission, both Mountjoy and Chichester behaved with the utmost friendliness toward the native population. Mountjoy took great pains to transport the inhabitants from the desolated places of south-east Tyrone to the more fruitful lands of Armagh, while Chichester did his utmost to get the chiefs to relinquish their old arbitrary exactions and establish their tenants as freeholders with fixed rents, but with no success.

In May, 1603, Mountjoy, in consideration of his complete suppression of Tyrone's rebellion, was promoted to the rank of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, the outstanding advantage of which title to the holder was that it permitted him to leave Ireland and appoint a temporary Deputy in his place. Mountjoy appointed Sir George Carey, and, taking immediate advantage of his new privilege, he sailed with the Earl of Tyrone and Rory O'Donnell in the *Tramontana*, and landed at Beaumaris towards the end of the month. The three then rode up to London together, Tyrone being freely pelted on the journey with mud and stones by the Welsh women who had lost husbands or sons in the Irish wars.

* Cal. State Papers, April, 1609. In this connection it is also to be noted that in 1610 Chichester wrote to Cecil complaining that "the country to be planted is full of people."

In London Tyrone's pardon and the restoration of his lands was duly confirmed by James I. Rory O'Donnell was, on Mountjoy's recommendation, created Earl of Tyreconnell, and the Lord-Lieutenant was sent back to supervise the redistribution of Ulster among the more deserving of the native chiefs. It could hardly be argued that Tyrone ranked among these, but, notwithstanding, the counties of Tyrone and Coleraine were restored to him, County Armagh was divided up between the descendants of Shane O'Neil, Tirlough McHenry and O'Hanlon, and Fermanagh was given in equal parts to Connor Roe Maguire and Cuconnaught Maguire. Chichester's apportionment of Antrim and Down has already been dealt with. The Lord-Lieutenant's chief difficulty, prior to his visit to London, had been over the question of Donegal, the chiefry of which had been left vacant by the flight of Hugh Roe. In this matter he was, strange to say, governed less by Docwra's advice than by other considerations.* However, even Docwra himself, it must be owned, was not a little puzzled as to the proper course to pursue in all the circumstances. The two obvious claimants were Neil Garv and Hugh Roe's younger brother Rory. On the face of things, the former's claims were incomparably the stronger of the two, as from the start he had consistently been opposed to the combination of the three rebel Hughs. Neil Garv also put forward the contention that Docwra had unconditionally guaranteed him the chiefry of Donegal in return for his services against the rebels. This contention was not admitted by Docwra, who maintained that the promise was only conditional. Even the disputed point, however, was an argument in Neil Garv's favour. It is only fair to Mountjoy and Docwra to admit that they appear to have given their most earnest attention to the problem, and the fact that the ultimate decision was a wrong one was the fault of the former rather than of the latter. He was guilty of the common error of assuming that because Rory was so far without any definite black mark against his name, he could not possibly be so undesirable a character as Neil Garv. Only too late did he discover his mistake. Docwra was under no such delusion. To his mind the gamble appeared more dangerous than the acceptance of imperfections which were known and limited. These imperfections he schedules very judiciously for the informa-

* See Neil Garv to Salisbury, May 30th, 1610.

tion and guidance of Mountjoy. He first of all recites Neil Garv's good points as follows: "His first coming without compulsion and bringing us to Lifford; his services many times commendably performed in his own person; the furtherance he gave us for planting at Donegal; the help he gave our men in their greatest wants when O'Donnell besieged them in Donegal Castle; his loss of his brother in that service; the trial of his fidelity in standing firm in so dangerous a time; and, lastly, the goods he forsook of his own to serve the Queen for half-pay, are arguments neither untruly gathered nor unjustly lodged to make much in his favour. On the other side, his extreme pride, ambition and insatiable covetousness; his want of knowledge when he is well dealt with; his importunity in all things right or wrong; his continual begging and unprofitable wasting of whatsoever he gets; his aptness to desperate and unspeakable discontent for trifles of no worth; his facility to be disliked by men of best quality, and his underhand juggling with the enemy he is truly to be charged with."* All the above charges were doubtless true enough, but none of them was of a criminal character, nor, indeed, such as might not be reasonably expected in any competitor for the coveted position, considering the material from which they had to be drawn.

While the question of the O'Donnell succession was still in abeyance, Neil Garv very foolishly prejudiced his own chances by two most ill-considered acts. The first of these was the premature proclamation of himself as O'Donnell, while the matter was, so to speak, still *sub judice*. This he did in direct contravention of Docwra's express instructions, and with the natural result that the indignant Rory was at once (literally) up in arms. That Rory was the popular favourite at the moment is made clear by the fact that Neil Garv could make no effective show against him in the field, and was driven to fall back on Docwra and to plead his protection. Docwra readily responded to this appeal by admitting Neil Garv within the precincts of Derry, and he then wrote to Mountjoy asking what he should do with his guest. Mountjoy replied that Neil Garv had acted in a rebellious and unconstitutional manner, and must be placed in confinement. From such a direct order there was no escape, but Docwra, who still had a very kindly

* Docwra to Mountjoy, Jan. 4th, 1602.

feeling for his late ally, made the confinement as easy as possible by placing Neil Garv on parole and allowing him liberty to walk about the town as he pleased. Unfortunately, Neil Garv took advantage of this privilege, and, having arranged for a horse to be brought to one of the gates, jumped on to its back and galloped off.*

This last foolish and indefensible act furnished the one excuse for which the Lord-Lieutenant was looking. How he might have acted otherwise we do not know. As things were he made no further pretence of hesitation, but sending for Rory O'Donnell to Dublin took him with him to London, as already described, and there recommended him for the chiefry of Donegal and the title of Earl of Tyrconnell.

Neil Garv's recent act of bad faith, coupled with the palpable flaws in his character, were Mountjoy's excuses for a line of action which was otherwise very hard to justify. There are strong reasons, however, for supposing that the reasons ostensibly waved on the surface were by no means those mainly responsible for Neil Garv's rejection, and this was certainly the unsuccessful candidate's own opinion. It is a remarkable fact that, from the first moment of personal contact between Mountjoy and Tyrone, the Lord-Lieutenant seems to have come under the hypnotic influence which Tyrone exercised on all those who came within range of his persuasive powers. Up to the date of Tyrone's submission Mountjoy, in obedience to Elizabeth's most stringent orders, had resolutely declined to meet the Earl. Tyrone's submission, however, necessitated a meeting, and though we know nothing of what actually transpired at that and subsequent meetings beyond the data officially published, it is impossible not to be struck by the astonishing change in Mountjoy's attitude from that date on. Prior to his first meeting with Tyrone at Mellifont he had been as implacable an enemy to the rebel Earl as the most exacting English monarch could have desired. He relentlessly hunted him from one refuge to another. He established such a chain of forts across the exits and entrances to his territory as to banish all possibility of military combination. These measures succeeded as they would have succeeded had any previous Deputy had the honesty and resolution to have adopted them. Tyrone's rebellion crumbled before such honesty of purpose

* Docwra Narration.

as it was bound to crumble, and as it would have crumbled had Lord Burgh lived. Tyrone admitted himself a beaten man and cried for mercy. Then came the meeting between conqueror and conquered, and, from that moment on, Mountjoy was a changed man. War was over, but the question of Tyrone's landed and political interests still occupied a front place in the Government programme, and it was in the settlement of these important points that Mountjoy's sudden and unaccountable bias made itself apparent. In every matter in dispute between Tyrone and the Government, or between Tyrone and the neighbouring chiefs, and even between Tyrone and Docwra, he sided with the late rebel. The recommendations of his old ally Docwra were coldly brushed aside. Even his honourable guarantees, given in perfect good faith, were treated as so much waste paper, if they happened in any way to clash with Tyrone's interests. Docwra's summing up of the Neil Garv position was a fair one. It furnishes evidence of careful thought and of an impartial judgment, and, on the lead which it gives, a jury of present-day readers would find in favour of the petitioner. The services which Neil Garv had rendered were substantial and genuine, while his shortcomings were those of the native temperament, and were reasonably to be looked for in any rival competitor. There was then, however, as there always has been, in the English Government of Ireland, the fatal tendency to attempt the propitiation of its enemies at the expense of its proved friends. This despicable policy has, where the Irish are concerned, consistently failed of its intended effect, and never has this been more strikingly the case than during the last few years of Mountjoy's administration. In spite of Docwra's earnest representations, the claims of the chiefs who had stood by Elizabeth in her long-drawn-out conflict with Tyrone were pushed into the background, while the benefits which should have been theirs were showered upon the man who was responsible for ten years of a bloody and devastating rebellion. The results were the eternal and unvarying results. The loyal chiefs were converted from potential friends into bitter and resentful foes, while Tyrone and Tyrconnell at once took advantage of the Government's generous pardon to start laying the seeds of a fresh rebellion.

We are now dealing, however, with the question of Neil Garv. Neil Garv was Tyrone's bitter enemy. Not only had

he been a contributory factor to the establishment of the Derry settlement which had proved the first and the last nail in the coffin of the rebellion, but had he not also chased the Earl for six miles at the point of a lance while pelting his back with insulting taunts? Tyrone's antagonism to Neil Garv, however, was actuated not only by hate, but by the far more powerful motive of fear. He foresaw in Calvagh's grandson a rival in the north who might, under certain conditions, very possibly overthrow the dynasty of Con Bacagh. He knew Neil Garv to be as ambitious as he was energetic. Ever since the death of Sir Art O'Neil he had been paying assiduous court to that bibulous knight's widow, not so much from admiration of her charms as because her sixteen-year-old son Tirlough was generally looked upon as the coming O'Neil.* He was generally popular with all the country people, and apparently had many more personal points in his favour than had any of Tyrone's sons. The lady had so far shown no disposition to accept Neil Garv's overtures, being no doubt disposed to wait and see him formally established as the O'Donnell before irretrievably linking her fortunes with his. Tyrone foresaw very clearly the possibilities behind the situation, and all his influence with Mountjoy was exerted to prevent Neil Garv from attaining a position which would at once have secured him the hand of Tirlough O'Neil's mother, and have given him an altogether too dangerous power in the north-west.

Rory O'Donnell, on the other hand, had not only been a probationary rebel himself, but was a brother of Tyrone's consistent partner throughout the late rebellion. There is no actual evidence to prove that it was in order to gratify Tyrone that Mountjoy gave the uncertificated Rory preference over so well-proved a man as Neil Garv, but probability points very strongly in that direction; for it is incontestable that O'Cahan's and O'Dogherty's interests and Docwra's honour were all sacrificed to the new-born desire to placate the Earl of Tyrone.†

The moral is not to be lightly scanned. Tyrone and Tyrconnell showed their gratitude to their benefactor by at once setting to work to hatch a new rebellion, while the once-friendly Neil Garv, Donnell O'Cahan and Cahir O'Dogherty were driven by disgust into an unnecessary rebellion of their own.

* Docwra Narration.

† See Neil Garv to Salisbury, May 30th, 1610.

The fate of Inishowen had always of necessity been very closely bound up in that of Donegal as a whole, and, in any settlement of the Donegal chiefry claim, the position of Inishowen called for very clear definition. Mountjoy fully realized this, and when Rory was made Earl of Tyrconnell and lord of Donegal, Cahir O'Dogherty was at the same time established as independent lord of Inishowen, with certain reservations of which more hereafter.

Neil Garv's position, in view of his late act of bad faith, was left for the time being in a more or less nebulous state, and was not finally settled till September, 1605, when Chichester (then Deputy) made a tour of the north adjusting various land claims. He then apportioned Sir Neil thirteen thousand acres in the Finn Valley, excluding Lifford itself, an arrangement which, as may be supposed, left a man of Neil Garv's grasping disposition very far from satisfied, and from that time on Calvagh's grandson was in a chronic state of discontent and semi-mutiny. When O'Dogherty's rebellion broke out in 1608, Neil Garv remained nominally on the side of the Government; but it was afterwards proved, by the evidence of a number of the Donegal Irish, that Neil Garv was in reality the main instigator of the rebellion, and that young Cahir O'Dogherty was merely his tool. The evidence made it quite clear that Neil Garv's object in encouraging O'Dogherty to rebel was to procure the latter's downfall, so that he himself might get possession of the lands of Inishowen. The proofs against him were so overwhelming and exposed such unsuspected depths of treachery, that he was arrested and confined in the Tower, where he remained till his death in 1626.

We are dealing now, however, with Chichester's adjustment of land claims in 1605, three years before the date of O'Dogherty's ill-fated rebellion. At the same time that Neil Garv was granted the Finn Valley lands, Tirlough McArt O'Neil was given the lordship of all that part of Tyrone which lies between the rivers Finn and Derg. This arrangement left young Tirlough very dissatisfied indeed, for Docwra had originally promised him the two Castles of Newtown and Dungiven, with all the lands between. The change of programme, though actually carried out by Chichester, was a legacy from Mountjoy, who—as in other cases—refused to ratify Docwra's guarantee, the excuse assigned being that the King had decreed that

Tyrone was to be restored to all his lands with certain specified exceptions, and that Newtown and Dungiven were not among those exceptions. It must be recorded to Chichester's credit that, when he became Deputy, he did his best to carry out the undertaking which Docwra had given some years before. In 1608 Tirlough was given a grant of Newtown, to which two years later was added the town of Strabane,* the favourite residence of his grandfather. Later on, however, for the purposes of the Plantation, it was found necessary to remove Tirlough McArt from this part of the world, and he was allotted three thousand acres at Dungannon, his three brothers Neil, Con and Brian being at the same time granted five hundred acres apiece in the same district.† In 1615 Tirlough was a captain and a representative man in the county, but as a landlord he left much to be desired, for in 1619 Pynnar, in making his Survey, found that he had done practically no work or building on his estate, nor granted leases to any of his tenants, all of whom, we are told, continued to plough by the tail in the Irish fashion.‡ In the great rising of 1641 Tirlough McArt appears in a more or less neutral capacity, the moderation of his attitude being mainly due to his inherent hatred and jealousy of both Sir Phelim O'Neil and Owen Roe, the former representing the line of Shane O'Neil and the latter that of Hugh Earl of Tyrone.

Another sorely dissatisfied man at the beginning of the seventeenth century was Sir Cahir O'Dogherty. His grievance was over the matter of Inch Island. This island in Lough Swilly, now joined to the mainland, had at all times been a recognized part of Inishowen. It contains some three thousand acres of excellent land. Shortly before Tyrone's submission, this desirable possession was—quite unjustifiably, in view of O'Dogherty's attitude during the rebellion—leased to Sir Ralph Bingley for twenty-one years. The transaction aroused the just indignation of Sir Henry Docwra, who remonstrated very warmly with the Lord-Lieutenant, and urged the immediate restoration of the island to its rightful owner. The Lord-Lieutenant's reply was that the transaction was completed and could not be undone.§

* Cal. State Papers : James, 1610-733.

† Cal. State Papers : James, 1610-703.

‡ Lodge's "Desiderata Curiosa."

§ Cal. State Papers : James, 1608-652.

In this extremity O'Dogherty undertook a journey to London in the late summer of 1603, where he personally laid his grievance before the King. So successfully did he plead his case that James wrote to his Lord-Lieutenant explicit instructions that O'Dogherty was to be restored to all his lands except Culmore Fort (as to which he was indifferent), and was for the future to be independent of the rule of Tyrconnell.* In spite of having gained his suit, O'Dogherty did not regain his island, for despite the King's command, and presumably with the connivance of Mountjoy, Bingley retained his possession of Inch Island. Mountjoy, by that time Earl of Devonshire, shortly afterwards died, and so escaped the King's displeasure. It is quite certain, however, that James knew that his orders had been disregarded, for on April 8th, 1608, he again wrote repeating his former command that Inch Island was to be restored to O'Dogherty. It is uncertain whether this order had been communicated to O'Dogherty before he went into rebellion. The probability is that it had not, for it could hardly have reached Derry before the end of April, and by that time O'Dogherty's fatal step had been taken, and his rights to Inch Island had for ever been forfeited.†

The worst case of all was that of O'Cahan. Docwra, in accepting the submission of this chief, had given an undertaking that after the war Coleraine should be independent of the overlordship of Tyrone. It was a proper and reasonable undertaking to give, in view of the fact that the presumptive overlord had been in rebellion for ten years, and at the moment was a proclaimed traitor with a price on his head. It is also very clear that O'Cahan's only reason for siding with the English was in order to shake off Tyrone's overlordship. Docwra's verbal guarantee in this matter was confirmed in writing by Mountjoy. After Tyrone's submission, however, the Lord-Lieutenant repudiated the arrangement entered into with O'Cahan on the same old plea that the King's commands were that Tyrone was to be reinstated in all his former possessions. On the receipt of the news, Docwra's indignation was such that he made a special journey to Dungannon, where he fought O'Cahan's case in the presence of the Lord-Lieutenant, Tyrone

* King to Devonshire, Sept. 4th, 1603.

† As late as 1613 Sir Ralph Bingley had estates close to if not actually in Inch Island. See Carew MSS., 1613-141.

himself and Tyrone's eldest son, Hugh Baron of Dungannon. He urged the claims of common justice, and backed these by reminding the Lord-Lieutenant of his own written promise. Nothing, however, could shake Devonshire's determination, as to which he disclaimed all responsibility by invariably falling back on the excuse of the Royal commands. Docwra's disgust found its expression in some very plain speaking, and he and the Lord-Lieutenant finally parted on the worst of terms. Thoroughly dejected with his failure, Docwra returned to Derry in company with the Baron of Dungannon and imparted the bad news to O'Cahan; whereupon the latter shook hands warmly with the son of the man who had defrauded him of his rights, cursed the unsuccessful advocate of his cause, and turned his back for ever on Docwra and Derry. The Baron of Dungannon crossed the water into Coleraine with him.*

Although the Lord-Lieutenant's decision had been adverse to O'Cahan, the latter had no intention of accepting it as final, or of sitting down tamely under a burden which was not only highly distasteful in itself, but from which he had at one time been absolved by the verbal promise of the Governor of Derry and the written promise of the Lord-Lieutenant. As a mark of his contempt for the whole arrangement, and of his defiance of the overlord to whom he had been subjected, he turned off Tyrone's illegitimate daughter, and added insult to this injury by declaring that she never had been his wife as he was already married when she came to him. To give still greater weight to this statement, he reinstated the original lady at his side. Tyrone's rejoinder was to raid Coleraine and carry off as many of O'Cahan's cattle as he could collect, as the equivalent of the marriage portion which O'Cahan had received with his daughter. This was Tyrone's first raid since his submission, and the atavistic tendencies which it gave evidence of were contemplated with uneasiness in official circles. Tyrone was ordered to return the cattle. He replied by submitting a counter-proposition in May, 1607, which was to the effect that all the points in dispute between him and O'Cahan should be decided by law. O'Cahan agreed to this, and his consent was hailed as a most promising sign of the advancing civilization of the native chiefs. The law of the land, however, upon investiga-

* Docwra Narration.

tion, found itself powerless to deal with the matter in the absence of any title deeds, contracts, or, indeed, documentary evidence of any sort. In this quandary the King, in July of the same year, commanded that Tyrone and O'Cahan should be sent over to London to accept his arbitration in the matter.* It is unfortunate that there is no evidence as to the exact nature of the King's judgment, for it would be of interest in connection with the subsequent charges levelled against O'Cahan. To O'Cahan himself, at the time, the judgment was of no practical interest or value, for Tyrone had hardly returned from his visit to London before he fled the country for ever.

The favourable reception of Tyrconnell's and O'Dogherty's suits in London encouraged Docwra to follow their example, and make a personal appeal at Court in the matter of his own Ulster interests. His main petition was in the matter of the Foyle salmon fishery, over which he claimed to have prescriptive rights tacitly sanctioned by the late Queen. In this matter Devonshire's stubborn hostility to his recent colleague had been very pointed, and he had resolutely refused to set his seal to the conveyance of the rights to Docwra, once more putting forward as his reason that, in conformity with the King's decree, the fishing rights had to revert to the Earl of Tyrone. Docwra therefore went to London, but he had his journey for nothing, for in this case the King confirmed the Lord-Lieutenant's ruling, judging, no doubt—after the fashion of people with a vicarious knowledge only of Ireland—that he had more to gain by propitiating his enemies than by rewarding his friends.

In some depression of spirits at his reverse, Docwra set out on his return journey to Derry. While off the east coast of Ulster, strong winds drove him into Carrickfergus, where, to his intense surprise, Chichester showed him the copy of a proclamation, recently published throughout the north, rescinding Docwra's commission as Governor of Derry.† In spite of this painful proof of the Lord-Lieutenant's sustained animosity, he completed his journey to the Foyle, where he found that the news of his downfall had preceded him and was in everybody's mouth. Very bitter must have been the feelings of the late Governor at this unlooked-for reward for his services. Those, he tells us, who had formerly flattered and cringed to him, now

* King to Chichester, July 16th, 1607.

† Docwra Narration.

flaunted him in the highway with open insults.* Chichester, who was by this time Lord Justice of Ireland and Deputy-elect, sympathized most cordially with the trials of his late colleague, and encouraged him by every means not to give up a struggle in which he had such obvious justice on his side. He himself exercised all the influence that he could bring to bear on his behalf, and with such good results that on February 8th, 1604, Docwra had the satisfaction of receiving a Royal warrant for the incorporation of Derry as a city, of which he himself was nominated Governor for life. Even this very proper recognition of his signal services to his country did not succeed in making life on the Foyle any longer endurable to Docwra. All his old associates in arms among the native Irish were still bitterly discontented with the extent of the lands meted out to them, and they not unnaturally held Docwra responsible for the blasting of their more sanguine expectations. It mattered nothing that he had done his utmost in their interests. Failure is an offence for which there is neither pity nor forgiveness, and he had failed. He wearied of the place and of the hopeless task of trying to gauge the point of view of those with whom he was called upon to deal, and early in 1606 he disposed of his house and lands to Mr. George Paulet and returned to England. Three years later he came back to Ireland as Treasurer at Wars, an office which he was accused by Sir John Bingley (who had not forgiven Docwra's opposition to his brother's annexation of Inch Island) of abusing. The charge, however, was frivolous and easily disproved, and Docwra came out of the ordeal without a stain on his character. "He served long and died poor," was the Earl of Cork's tribute to his memory, after his death in 1631.†

* Docwra Narration. † Earl of Cork to Lord Dorchester, June 28th, 1681.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

Tyrone takes up residence in Drogheda—He hangs a number of his old associates—His fallen state—He fails to get his tenants to return to him—The King's considerate policy towards the native peasantry—Dissatisfaction of the chiefs—Opening of a new era of justice for the lower orders—Alarm of Tyrone and Tyrconnell—Rumours of a fresh conspiracy—Henry O'Neil and Henry O'Hagan in Spain—Lady Tyrone is interviewed by Caulfield—Anonymous letter to Sir William Usher—Tyrone takes leave of the Moores—His ride to Rathmullen—Flight of the Earls—Untimely deaths of many members of the party—Tyrone's character—Opinion of the Roman Catholic lords of the Pale—His innumerable daughters—Extinction of the main line of O'Neil.

TYRONE, after his visit to England, did not return to his old haunts at Dunganon, but took up his residence in Drogheda, where, in very straitened circumstances, he lived for a time an obscure and uneventful life.* To relieve the monotony of his existence, he occasionally got on his horse and rode to the borders of his old country, where he did his best to offer practical proof of his change of sides by hanging a number of people whose submission was rather later than his own, included among whom was one of his own nephews.† In the course of this display of zeal, he is reported to have hanged nineteen persons of good quality, and many others of humbler station, between the dates of his submission and his flight.‡ His choice of Drogheda as a place of residence was no doubt to some extent dictated by its proximity to his old friends, the Moores of Mellifont (with whom his three-year-old son Shane was at the time being fostered), coupled with the knowledge that his own country was no longer productive of the good things that he so dearly loved. South-east Tyrone, Down and Antrim were desolate and deserted. Most of the better-class families, who had the means of moving, had migrated

* Sir John Davies to Cecil, April 19th, 1601.

† Chichester to Cecil, June 8th, 1601.

‡ Cal. State Papers : James, 517.

further south to where there was food in plenty. Tyrone, we are told, did his utmost to get his old tenants to return ; but these, having once tasted the joys of freedom from " his extreme exactions, declared that they would sooner be strangled."* The peasants, in fact, for the first time in the history of Ireland, were beginning to experience the advantages of being scheduled as human beings, instead of as mere chattels, and they were by no means eager to revert to the old order of things. James I.'s policy, weak and ill-advised as it may justly be considered in the matter of the chief rebels, was from the first humane and considerate towards those of lower degree. Even the most persistent of the minor rebel chiefs, such as Cormac McBaron, Brian McHugh Oge, Patrick McArt Moyle, and Ever McCooley were nominally restored to their lands, but shorn of a certain number of their old seigniority rights. No longer were they free to exact what they could from their unhappy serfs, for these were accorded the privilege of appeal to properly constituted courts. Common justice and redress from tyranny became open to all. Sir Edward Pelham records that after he had been dispensing justice in Donegal, the people crowded round and blessed him as an angel sent from Heaven, praying him on their knees to come back again and once more adjust their wrongs.† Nor was James merely content with curbing the excesses and depredations of the native chiefs. The same wholesome restrictions were imposed on his own soldiery. The excellence of his intentions in this direction is made very clear in a letter which he wrote in April, 1605, to Chichester, at that time Deputy, embodying sentiments of which no trace is to be found in the caustic letters of the dead Queen. The King charged Chichester to " use all his endeavours to ease the people, as much as may be, of the burden or oppression of the soldiery, in order that they may perceive that those who are maintained in pay shall serve rather for necessity in striving to preserve the good subject than to annoy any."

In accordance with these admirable instructions, Chichester issued proclamations throughout the country embodying the benevolent intentions of the King. These had their immediate effect. On May 19th Captain Phillips wrote to Salisbury, from Castle Toome, to the effect that he had published the

* Sir John Davies to Cecil, April 19th, 1604.

† Sir John Davies to Cecil, Dec. 1st, 1603.

King's proclamation throughout County Antrim. "This," he wrote, "has had such an impression in them (the Irish) that they will not now endure any more wrongs from their chieftains; but they immediately seek for redress, which formerly they durst never do, but were as bondsmen. They now begin to have the feeling of His Majesty's laws. This abates the superiority of their lords to their great grief; for now they fall from them and follow His Majesty's officers to crave justice against their lords."

Such socialistic innovations were, as may well be understood, exceeding distasteful to the chiefs, and to none more so than to the Earl of Tyrone, who, though restored to his lands, found much difficulty in extracting from men who had a tribunal of appeal behind them anything approaching his one-time enormous income. Herein lay the seed of a lurking discontent—a seed which, in Ireland, never fails to drop on a responsive soil. Tyrone, who by his sustained rebellion and his intrigues with Spain, had forfeited his head and all his lands a dozen times over, began to consider himself an aggrieved person because he was no longer as rich as he had been. His second son Henry was already in Spain. Henry O'Hagan was sent after him, on what secret mission no man knows, but certainly neither for the good of his health, nor for the good of James King of England. In March, 1606, it was given out all over the north that the two Henrys would land in Ireland during the summer at the head of four thousand Spaniards.* What good such a force would have done Tyrone, had it come, it is not easy to conceive, after the hopeless collapse of the Spanish-Irish combination at Kinsale, but that both he and Tyrconnell built great hopes on a second interference by Spain is tolerably clear.

Rumours of a new conspiracy, in which Tyrone, Tyrconnell and Lord Delvin were the principal movers, began to reach the ears of the Government from many quarters. The talk was of a general rising, the seizure of Dublin Castle, and the murder of the Deputy, to be followed by the massacre of all English on a given day.† Lady Tyrone was sounded on the subject. She was known to hate her lord very acutely. In his drunken moods he habitually ill-used her, and now that her political

* Chichester to Salisbury, April 4th, 1606.

† Cal. State Papers: James, 1613-732.

importance was a thing of the past (for Magennis had long since joined the English), he made no secret of his distaste for her. At one time he had gone so far as to collect all the priests in the district with a view to getting rid of her by some ecclesiastical divorce process, but the lady, with some spirit, threatened that if he did put her away, she would lay information against him that would lose him his head in a very short time.* The threat prevailed and the assembled priests dispersed to resume their normal pursuits. While Lady Tyrone was still in the communicative mood inspired by this incident, Sir Toby Caulfield was sent to see what she had to say on the subject of the Earl's treasonable schemes. Nothing very definite resulted from this interview. The lady furnished a number of details of a suspicious and damaging character, but nothing that was sufficiently tangible to justify an arrest.

Further incriminating charges, however, were laid against the Earl in an anonymous letter addressed to Sir William Usher, the Clerk of the Council, which set forth in detail the particulars of a plot entered into by Tyrone and Tyrconnell to assassinate the Lord Deputy and Sir Oliver Lambert. Lord Delvin, who was himself implicated in the conspiracy, afterwards admitted that the question of Chichester's and Lambert's assassination had been discussed between the two Earls, but that nothing definite had been decided.† The anonymous letter in question was accorded far more attention than such communications usually deserve, and formed the subject of much serious debate among the members of the Privy Council. Even with this letter thrown in, the sum total of evidence from all sources fell far short of providing a clear case for the prosecution. The overcharged consciences of the Earls, however, clearly saw phantom gallows in every cloud that blew across the land, for—to the intense surprise of everyone, including their close associates and Tyrone's late Government accomplices—they made secret arrangements to fly the country. Tyrconnell and young Cucconaught Maguire chartered a French ship, which came round to Rathmullen in Lough Swilly at the end of August, 1607. News of its arrival was sent to Tyrone, who, on hearing that the eventful moment had arrived, paid a flying visit to Mellifont, where he took a tearful farewell of

* Examination of Neil Garv : Cal. State Papers, Aug. 7th, 1606.

† Meehan's "Earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnell."

his friends the Moores.* He then made straight across country for Rathmullen, taking with him his Countess, not so much from motives of love, but rather from fear lest, if left behind, she should lodge inriminating evidence against him. On the road Lady Tyrone grew very faint and weary with the Earl's hard riding, which was like that of a demented man, and, while yet far, far from their goal, she slipped from her horse with fatigue ; whereupon Tyrone drew his sword and swore that he would hew off her head if she did not recover herself and wear a more cheerful countenance.† Eventually they reached Rathmullen, having declined, with a suspicion which was not justified, a hospitable invitation to dine with Sir Richard Hansard at Lifford. From Lough Swilly the two Earls set sail for Normandy, in company with Cuconnaught Maguire, Henry O'Hagan, Henry Hoveden, Owen McArt McBaron—later on to become celebrated as Owen Roe—Caffar O'Donnell, a son of Cormac McBaron, an infant son of Tyreonnell, and many others of minor degree. Besides his Countess, Tyrone took with him his two sons Shane and Brian (both under seven years of age), but not Con, who was his youngest. This child had been put out to foster somewhere in Tyrone, and though Tyrone made eager search for him, he was unable to discover his whereabouts and eventually sailed without him.‡ Con was eventually taken charge of by Sir Toby Caulfield, who educated him till he was fifteen, when he was sent to Eton.§ From Normandy the two Earls found their way to Flanders, and finally reached Rome, where in July, 1616, Tyrone died, stone blind. Never was there a more ill-fated flight than that of the Ulster Earls. The hand of death seems to have pursued the whole party from the moment of their sailing. Tyreonnell died within a year of leaving Ireland. His brother Caffar only survived him a few weeks. Tyreonnell's only son lived till 1642, and with his death the main line of the O'Donnells became extinct. Cuconnaught Maguire, another very young man, died at Genoa in August, 1608, about the same time as Tyreonnell.|| His brother only lived till 1610, in which year Henry O'Hagan also died.

* Sir John Davies to Salisbury, Sept. 12th, 1607.

† *Ibid.*

‡ Chichester to Privy Council, Sept. 7th, 1607.

§ Cal. State Papers: James, 1610-543.

|| Meehan's "Earls."

Of Tyrone's sons, the eldest, Hugh Baron Dungannon, died in Italy without issue. Henry, who had always been sickly, survived his brother but a short time, and Brian was found hanged in his room in Brussels with his hands tied behind his back.* Shane lived the longest, and finally died at Catalonia in 1642, having for some years prior to his death assumed the title of Earl of Tyrone.

The character of Hugh O'Neil, second Earl of Tyrone, is one of extreme complexity and of considerable interest. Fynes Moryson, who must have enjoyed many opportunities of seeing him, describes him thus: "He was of mean stature, but of a strong body, able to endure fatigue, watching and hard fare, being withal industrious and active, valiant, affable, and apt to manage great affairs, and of a high dissembling subtlety and profound wit." There can be no doubt but that he was a man of singularly engaging personality. Making all allowances for the freedom with which, by means of his enormous income, he was able to buy friendship, or at any rate good-will, the universal favour with which he was regarded by all the English with whom he came in contact, not excepting Mountjoy, bears testimony to the remarkable charm of his presence and manner. He was a man of a highly emotional temperament, and a very small occasion was sufficient to move him to tears; nor do we find that, judged by the standard of the time, his instincts were naturally cruel or bloodthirsty. On the contrary, he seems to have avoided bloodshed on many occasions when circumstances and the temper of the times would, in a great measure, have excused it. His inclinations and abilities lay very pointedly in the direction of diplomacy, and in modern times he would probably have excelled as a foreign ambassador. Unfortunately, the exigencies of the times demanded that he should be a military leader, for which he was totally unfitted in every respect. He was irresolute in command, and very timid personally in the hour of battle.

In private life he was totally devoid of any power of restraint upon his inclinations, but in that respect it cannot be claimed that he stood out conspicuously from his fellows. He treated all his wives with callous cruelty. His fifth wife, Catherine Magennis, complained bitterly of his continual drunkenness and ill-usage. Before this complaint we hear nothing of drunken

* Meehan's "Earls."

habits in connection with the Earl's character, and it may well be that the practice grew on him with advancing years. In Normandy, however, we learn that both he and Tyrconnell greatly offended the French by their drunken and riotous mode of living.

Catherine Magennis was his fifth wife, but there is reason to believe that she was not his last ; but that after his arrival in Rome he contracted an alliance of some kind, regular or irregular, with a daughter of Tyrconnell.*

The Roman Catholic lords of the Pale in 1600, at a time when Tyrone was posing as a champion of the true faith, gave the following unflattering description of their co-religionist : " For of Tyrone you plainly know him to be in his own life insolent, cruel and loathsome, enemy to all virtues and civility, defiled with all sensuality, impieties and barbarities (which in his own petty Government you may daily behold), where he strangled with his own hands his own cousin-germane Hugh, and at another time tortured his own natural brother Tirlough McHenry."†

These charges were possibly unfounded, or at least exaggerated—as, for instance, that of having hanged Hugh with his own hands—and were doubtless made in a sycophantic spirit which sought the approval of the Queen, but that his morals were a negligible quantity is established beyond doubt. In 1601 he was currently reported to be suffering from venereal disease.‡ His supply of illegitimate children would appear to have been inexhaustible. The amazing preponderance of daughters among his and Tirlough Luineach's illegitimate children would seem to suggest that many of the illegitimate sons of the chiefs were not reared to maturity. Both Tyrone and Tirlough Luineach could at any moment produce a marriageable daughter, but of sons, other than legitimate, we hear very little. Tirlough Luineach had two legitimate sons and one illegitimate (Art), but a perfect emporium of daughters. Tyrone had four legitimate and one base son, Con, but of daughters he had an unfailing store. Margaret, the eldest, married Richard Butler, afterwards Lord Mountgarret. Mary married Sir Ross McMahon and afterwards Sir Brian McMahon. Alice married Sir Randall

* See Cal. State Papers : Charles, 1628–1197.

† Cal. State Papers, Vol. 207, Part VI.—141.

‡ Cal. State Papers, March, 1601.

McSorley, and Sara married Sir Arthur Magennis. The latter, we are told, was a very beautiful lady, who could drink beer and usquebaugh with any man.* In this respect we are given to understand that the fair Sara was no exception to the general rule. "Men and women of every rank pour usquebaugh down their throats by day and night," Sir Thomas Bodley tells us, in his most amusing and instructive account of his visit to Sir Arthur Magennis at Castle Wellan.

In addition to the above-named ladies we know that Tyrone had daughters married to Sir Henry Oge, Sir James McDonnell† (Angus's eldest son), Hugh Maguire, Henry McArt,‡ Sir James McSorley, Sir Donnell O'Cahan and Hugh Roe O'Donnell. The last two we know were illegitimate, and the same is probably true of many, if not all, of the others.§ We have it on the authority of a contemporary writer that the sixteenth-century Irish never married except for political purposes.|| Marriage was entered into by the chiefs with a view to extending their power; but love-affairs were conducted on quite independent lines. With the divorce process conveniently simple, no O'Neil was likely to be in any way embarrassed by a superfluity of illegitimate daughters, whom he could always marry off to neighbouring chiefs and so extend his political connections. Illegitimate sons, however, had no marketable value, and were more than likely to prove troublesome, and even dangerous, adjuncts to the chiefs who were responsible for their being. We therefore hear very little of illegitimate sons, and it is a reasonable assumption that, except in very special cases, these did not survive infancy.

With the French ship that left Rathmullen for Normandy went the last of the Earls of Tyrone. All the sons of the second Earl died prematurely and without issue, with the exception of Shane, who was reputed to have left a son Hugh. This Hugh, however, makes no figure in history, and was at no time a factor in the internal affairs of Ulster. In the great

* See Sir Thomas Bodley's visit to Lecale: "*Ulster Journal of Archæology*."

† Capt. Phillips to Cecil, March 11th, 1602.

‡ Cal. State Papers, Vol. 197-65.

§ Sir John Davies to Salisbury, Nov. 12th, 1606; and Sir Henry Bagenal to Deputy, April 6th, 1597.

|| See Appendix A to Introduction Carew MSS., 1589-1600.

rebellion of 1641 the only two claimants to the chieftry of O'Neil were Sir Phelim O'Neil, a grandson of Sir Henry Oge, who was himself a grandson of the great Shane, and Owen Roe O'Neil, who was a nephew of Tyrone, though with several bars-sinister in his escutcheon.

THE END

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